THE MOVABLE SCHOOL GOES TO THE NEGRO FARMER

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THOMAS MONROE CAMPBELL

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The Movable School *Goes To* The Negro Farmer

By

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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THOMAS MONROE CAMPBELL
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TO MY WIFE

who by her loving attentiveness to our six children and home has made it possible for me to travel throughout the South for the past twenty-three years in the development of this work.

PREFACE

A semi-autobiographical sketch of the writer, setting forth his early life in Georgia, how he went to Tuskegee, worked his way through the school under Booker T. Washington, and was chosen by the federal government as the first Negro Extension Agent, operating the first Movable School, a development begun at Tuskegee Institute twenty-nine years ago. The book outlines the purpose and results of this type of education for rural people, depicts its presents scope and influence in this country and abroad, and presents a brief word as to the future of Negroes in rural life.

The primary aim of this book is to create a wider and keener interest in the lives of the rural people in the deep South, so that ultimately a larger portion of public aid will reach those who are farthest down the economic scale and whose most urgent need is instruction in the commonplace things of life.

The author takes this means to pay tribute to the late Booker T. Washington, the founder of Tuskegee Institute, who so ably fashioned the idea of a Movable School. Booker T. Washington had unbounded concern for the fullest development of the rural people as well as an optimistic outlook on all lateral possibilities of Tuskegee Institute in connection with this type of extension teaching. For the plans of construction and equipment of the original Movable School, special tribute is paid to Dr. George W. Carver, eminent Tuskegee scientist.

To the many persons who have at various times assisted the author with comment and compilation, he is under deep obligation. His thanks are especially due to Dr. Bradford Knapp, educator and pioneer agriculturist, for his belief in the humble purpose of the author; to Mr. J. A. Evans, former associate chief, Extension Service, United States Department of Agriculture, for his friendly attitude toward the work with the Negro farmer; to Dr. L. N. Duncan, president, Alabama Polytechnic Institute, and director, Alabama Extension Service, for his cooperative spirit in the maintenance of the Alabama Movable School; to Dr. R. R. Moton, president-emeritus of Tuskegee Institute, and Dr. F. D. Patterson, president of Tuskegee Institute, for their moral and financial support and enthusiastic endorsement of the work; to Dr. J. N. Baker, Alabama state health officer, for his approval and financial support in helping to maintain a registered nurse with the Movable School.

He also wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness to his entire Extension Service clerical staff; the Movable School force; Mr. A. L. Holsey, director, Tuskegee Institute press service; Mr. H. O. Abbott, head of the Institute printing division; and others who, in their spare time, aided in the organization of the material.

—T. M. Campbell

Tuskegee Institute, Alabama,

March, 1936.

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INTRODUCTION

There have been many so-called Movable Schools in America. Most of them have given away to the present form of Agricultural Extension Work through county agents, county home demonstration agents, and 4-H club agents. It remained for one of the most outstanding Negro institutions of America to establish a Movable School which endures and constantly increases its usefulness. The story of the origin and development of Tuskegee Institute under Doctor Booker T. Washington cannot be told here, but it is a fascinating story and one of the greatest contributions to the advancement of the Negro race in America.

Washington's idea was to adapt education to the immediate needs of his people, to deal with problems which were close at hand. He wasted little time on theories, It was not until the beginning of the Farmers' Cooperative Demonstration Work of the United States Department of Agriculture, which was the forerunner of the present Extension Work through county agents, home demonstration agents and 4-H Club workers, that the late Dr. Seaman A. Knapp ever came in contact with Tuskegee. The ideas and principles which Tuskegee was trying to put forth through the Movable Schools were in such perfect harmony with the ideas of the demonstration work that the two thoughts became merged at once into one effort. Both of them believed in teaching by example. They both believed in doing the obvious thing immediately and then lead on from that to the next step in improvement. Both laid great stress on self-help, on thrift, and on hard work intelligently applied.

I have known this Movable School work for more than twenty years and the author's interesting story of its development is well worth preserving as one of the most unique and one of the most successful examples of real teaching to be found anywhere in the world. The method is being copied in many other countries and is peculiarly adapted to work among backward people. The author of this book is one of the most outstanding servants of the Negro race in America. Inspired by the teaching and example of Doctor Booker T. Washington and the faculty at Tuskegee, T. M. Campbell has become one of the most useful men among his race. In this book he modestly omits his great contribution to the Negro Extension work not only in Alabama but in all the Southern States, in each of which the Negro work is associated with one of the Negro schools in full cooperation with the Land-Grant college of the state. It must be remembered that the progress of an individual in education may be rapid, but the task of training a great mass of people is slow and laborious. The finest thing which can be said for the Movable School movement is that statistical material now begins to show distinct evidences of advancement of Negroes as farmers and as a people, which can be traced readily to the work of a number of forces among which the Movable School movement from Tuskegee has had a most important part.

Bradford Knapp, *President,*
Technological Institute,
Lubbock, Texas.

(Dr. Knapp is a son of the late Seaman A. Knapp, founder of Cooperative Extension Work in America).

PART I

A SEMI-AUTOBIOGRAPHY

CHAPTER ONE

Childhood and Early Struggles

THE SCATTERED and meager information which I have concerning my grandparents is limited to my recollection of occasional references by my father, William A. Campbell, to his mother. He had no recollection of his father, and had no full brothers or sisters.

My grandmother was, of course, a slave, and belonged to James Campbell, who with his family and retinue of slaves, lived on a large plantation in Wilkes County, Georgia.

I have heard father tell how, at the outbreak of the Civil War, he and his mother were left in the Campbell home. At the close of the War he was thirteen years of age, and although free, he and his mother continued to live on the estate of James Campbell.

When old man "Jim" Campbell died, my father, who had since married and moved to another county, journeyed back to the plantation to attend his funeral, and for many years thereafter he made annual visits to see the widow of "old man Jim," his former master.

I have no authentic information as to the date of my grandmother's death, although father said that she lived "many years after the War."

I was born in Elbert County, Georgia, February 11, 1883, about five miles from the small town of Bowman, and about twenty-five miles from the borderline of

South Carolina. My father was a Methodist preacher and a tenant farmer. When I was about four years old he came into possession of a small tract of land and a house in the town of Bowman and we moved from the rented farm.

My earliest recollection goes back to a beautiful spring day when we moved from "out in the country" to our own house in town.

We had not lived long in our new home before we had the first sorrow which I recall. Mother passed away shortly after giving birth to a child, which also died. I was then about five years of age. She left father with six children, all of whom were uneducated. I was told later that she perhaps hastened her death by taking in washing and by working on the farm to help in the struggle to pay for our little home. During the time of mother's long, fatal illness a large doctor's bill accumulated, which necessitated the mortgaging of our home. As this mortgage was never removed, the property finally went for debt. Father's ministerial duties kept him away from home a great portion of the time. This placed many hardships upon the rest of the family. My brother, Willie D., several years my senior, was hired to the doctor who attended mother during her illness. My three older sisters were hired to white families as cooks or nursemaids. This left my youngest sister and me virtually alone in the home most of the time. I can never forget how frightened we were during those nights and how much we suffered from the consequent neglect. For example, there were many days when no meals were prepared and none to be prepared.

Up to the time of our mother's death my father had been very attentive to his family, but it seemed that the loss of his wife caused him to lose interest in us and most of the time he was gone out into what seemed to us the "big wide world." It was during one Christmas while he was away that I lost all belief in the existence of Santa Claus. We were told that this dispenser of gifts came down the chimney and brought nice things to good children. True to what I had been taught, I decided to be sure that Santa Claus had room in which to put my things, so upon retiring I tied strings around my pants legs and hung them on a nail by the fireplace. But to my disappointment the next morning there was nothing in them.

I can easily recall the first day the idea of learning came to my mind. We were still living in the house that we had owned before the death of my mother. It was situated two or three hundred yards from the public school house. During the school session, my sister and I were accustomed to go on amusement trips around the school house, especially at recess time, when the children were out at play. One morning the teacher, a woman, approached me where I was playing in the sand, and asked if I did not wish to come to school. I told her that I did. She then invited me to come down the next day. I told her I did not have any books, or any clothes to wear. She told me to come anyway. So the next morning, although very conscious of my shabby appearance, I was there. The teacher asked me if I knew my alphabet. I told her I did not know all of it. Not having a book for me, she took an old almanac and wrote the alphabet down in lead pencil

and began to teach me. I used this improvised school book for a week or so, until I had committed the entire alphabet to memory. When father returned home, the school teacher sent for him and had me recite before him. She also insisted on his buying me a printed book. I was very happy the morning I went to school with my new book; now I could lay aside my old almanac and study very hard.

One day during my first week in school a little incident happened that made a lasting impression on me. My baby sister accompanied me to school because there was no one to stay with her at home. On that day, as was the custom, when noon came, all the students who had brought dinner began eating. As we lived nearby, we went home, only to face the fact that there was nothing for us to eat. We were hungry. It was early in the fall. Sweet potatoes! Action follows thought! I went out in the sweet potato patch and dug two very large potatoes, gave one to my sister and took one myself. Of course, there was no time to cook them before school reassembled, so we strolled back to the school house, enjoying our nature-prepared meal. The pupils saw us coming and some very mischievous boys and girls began to laugh at us, saying, "Oh, look at Tom and Pearl eating raw potatoes for dinner." But there was one girl in the crowd who was sympathetic. She came to us where I was bent beside the house trying to hide our potatoes and crying very freely. She said, "Don't cry; you may have part of my dinner."

For a while things progressed in this loose and unsatisfactory fashion until father's friends began to criticise him for not staying at home and caring for his

children. He then employed my aunt to keep house for us while he continued his itinerant preaching, farming having been given up for a while after my mother died. Unfortunately, my aunt was not a good housekeeper and so neglected us that the criticism against father continued. Finally, he decided to get married and bring home his children who were hired out to the several white families. Our new mother was a widow with three children by her first husband. From the very first day after her arrival trouble began, and there was very little peace in the home as long as she lived. Especially was this true among the children. Apparently father and his new wife got along beautifully, but among the children there was trouble at the table, at work or play. So much dissatisfaction arose that my brother finally left the farm and was never at home any length of time afterwards. After this second marriage I almost lost sight of school, as duties on the farm were too urgent to permit my attending the regular short term provided in my community.

Because of the sudden increase in his family, my father rented another farm and began operating on a large scale. With this expansion, he gave up regular itinerant preaching and simply did "local" work. One thing in his favor was that aside from occasional criticism for neglect of his children, he was always well thought of by the people in the community, both white and colored. Men of both races called upon him for advice along religious and civic lines, even though he was, technically speaking, an uneducated man.

My stepmother did not live long after her marriage and with his large family and the many debts accom-

panying it, father was never able to come into possession of any more land or a home; so he fell back into the "renter" class and remained there the rest of his life. He was evidently a fairly good farmer, as there was keen competition between land owners to secure him as a tenant. His credit was generally good with the storekeepers. He had some rather firm principles and rules regarding his children to which he firmly clung: namely, that we should not steal or lie, and that we should go to church and Sunday School.

I was considered by my brother and sisters, and by my father too, as being exceedingly slow when it came to performing any duties about the farm. I remember one occasion when father made a proposition to me that if I would begin on Monday morning and hoe a certain piece of ground, about an acre in size, which was planted in cotton, I might have the rest of the week for vacation. I thought this was the greatest opportunity that had ever been offered me. My larger sisters, who were engaged in other work elsewhere on the farm, envied me because of the proposition. I told father that I would be ready to go fishing not later than the middle of the week. Then he made an amendment to the agreement, that if I did not finish within the allotted time, he was going to whip me. The smaller members of the family, including my stepmother's children and my baby sister, were my running mates, but not any of them was large enough to work in the field. I told them that if they would help me finish, I would take them fishing. We began Monday morning, hoed two or three rows, became interested in bugs and butterflies, and thus let the morning slip by without accomplishing

much of anything. At noon father asked me how I was progressing. I told him, "Fine." He warned me that I must finish that plot. I went back in the afternoon and again took the young children with me. Pretty soon, I decided that we would all stop and go to the spring for some cool water. There it was so shady and inviting that we spent the larger portion of the afternoon around the spring catching small fish and tadpoles. When night came I had hoed not more than one or two rows more. Father again asked me how I was getting along. As before, I said, "Fine." Tuesday and Wednesday passed the same as Monday. Thursday came and I had not hoed more than a third of the plot. Father became so concerned about my operations that on Thursday afternoon, instead of going to the field where he had been working, he stayed in sight of my cotton patch. Not knowing of his change in plan, I was carrying out my regular afternoon program of going to the spring after water. After I had satisfied my thirst, I went to the house, where I found my playmates roasting apples. I asked for some of the apples. They refused me. Being larger, I proceeded to take them. A fight ensued and just at that time I heard someone walking in the next room. I turned a moment later to see my father stealing upon me with a buggy whip. I made a hurried run from the house to my little cotton plot. He hit me two or three licks, but was unable to catch me again. That night at supper he told me that I would have to finish that piece of cotton by Saturday night, and if I should finish before, to continue working in the next plot.

I remember another occasion when father forbade my sister and me to enter his watermelon patch, saying

that the melons were not fully ripe. The melon plot was located on a piece of ground near the cotton field. One day, after he had gone to work, my sister and I made the proposition that I would go down to the patch and pull a melon that I thought was ripe. From the place where he was working in an adjoining field he could not see the main patch, but a high ridge bordering it was in plain view. As I crawled over that high point, he saw me. When he came to the house, he asked me if I went into his watermelon patch. I told him in one breath that I had not been in it. As he was standing under a tree, his answer was to reach up, pull down a large limb and, without ceremony, flog me over the head and shoulders, not giving me time to say a word. Finally, I got a chance to tell him that my sister had eaten some of the watermelon too. He said that he was not whipping me because I had stolen a watermelon, but because I had told him a lie.

We lived near the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, and every year during the fall it was a common sight to see ten or fifteen covered wagons, similar to the old "prairie schooner," coming down out of the mountains driven by long-bearded white men. The tops of their loads would consist of apples, chestnuts, and dried fruit, but it was understood that the best corn whiskey, distilled right in the mountains, could be procured from most of these men. "The apple wagon men," as we called them, had a camping place near my house. When father would chance to be away from home, I would steal five or ten bundles of fodder or some corn and sell them for apples and chesnuts for my sister and myself.

With these delicacies, sister and I would have a big time as long as they lasted.

My father, like most tenants, had the habit of moving, and it seemed that we moved to a new farm almost every year, but it always interested me to meet new playmates and live in different houses. Frequently, we moved into a house that had been previously occupied by white people who had left the farm and gone to town.

As already intimated, my father was never imbued with the idea of schooling his children. Certainly, he was not interested enough to make any great sacrifice to that end. My brother, who by this time had grown into early manhood, began to have a desire to leave the community for good. One morning father told him to do some work in a certain field. He went there and began to work as he had been instructed, but after an hour or so, he left his tools in the field and made his way through the woods. From that day he never lived at home again.

Later he related to me the story of his escape from home. He walked the greater part of the distance to a neighboring town where he secured work. After being in that town a year or more, he served as apprentice to a colored carpenter and later became engaged to the carpenter's daughter. He was planning to marry and settle down to the life of a carpenter but during the Christmas week he and a son of the carpenter went hunting. When they returned from their trip they were playing with the gun. The carpenter's son dropped the gun with the hammer down, and striking the floor, it discharged its load of shot into my brother's leg. His foot was shot entirely off. He was taken into the home of

these people as one of the family, the doctor's bill and all expenses being paid. The young woman still insisted that they marry, but he refused on the grounds that she would not want to bother with him, maimed for life as he was. As soon as he was able to move about he had the carpenter make a wooden leg for him. With this strapped around his waist, he taught himself to walk. After his misfortune, he became definitely interested in getting an education.

Since my brother had left home, it became my duty to run most of the errands. On one occasion father told me that early the next morning I was to go to town and get the public wagon so that he might take a bale of cotton to the gin. He aroused me before day to start on my journey. We were then living two and a half miles from town. I was slow and "scary" and just as soon as I had gotten out of hearing distance from home, I hid myself in a fence corner and waited until daybreak before I set out for town.

When I arrived at the gin, I was told that the wagon had been held for father, but thinking that he was not going to send for it, they had loaned it to somebody else. I was told to wait for an hour or so. The delay gave me pleasant anticipations. Living in the country as I was at that time, I was always glad to spend every moment possible in town. Especially did I want to see the trains. Always eager to do little jobs for people in order to get money to buy candy and chewing gum, I proceeded to chop stove wood for a man. I finished between 9:00 and 10:00 o'clock, but instead of returning to the gin to see whether or not the wagon was there, I went to the store, and with the few pennies earned

bought some much desired knick-knacks, and stood around listening to white men tell funny stories. It was not long before the train came in, and I went with everybody else to the station to see who came and who left. When the train had gone, I found my way back to some other store and listened to the people talk and tell tales. I went to the postoffice and called for mail for all of my family. When the stores closed for the dinner hour, I waited for them to reopen and again went back to listen to more stories.

Another train came in at 1:00. I went to see that. Later I started for the 2:00 o'clock train, but who should be standing in the crowd but father. He called me and wanted to know what on earth I was doing, as the wagon had been ready for half a day and he had been waiting for it ever since daylight. He was so angry that he did not say anything more, but told me to go home at once. There I found all the members of my family so disgusted with me that I could not explain to them. So I took my axe, went to the woods and began cutting wood without being told. I kept this up until night. When I returned to the house, I refused to eat supper and went immediately to bed. About 11:00 that night, father sent for me. It isn't hard to guess the rest. He had brought home two good hickory switches, which he used alternately. I shall never forget that day. I was even disgusted with my own actions after hearing his view of it.

Then one day my brother came home to see us. I well remember the gloom cast over all of the family when we saw him, a one-legged man, coming up the path to the house—all remembering how healthy and full

of life he was the morning he ran away from home. He appeared, however, to be in the best of spirits and told us he was all right.

About this time father again began hiring out the children. He was still a widower and the children were older. My first experience as a hired hand was neither fortunate nor uplifting. I was hired to a white man who owned a rather large vineyard. This man not only grew grapes but made them into wine and sold the finished product. Having a license to sell wine, he took advantage of this and sold whiskey also, without a license. It was here that I first saw really bad people. This man had a family of boys and girls. At times every member of the family except the mother was drunk. Some nights when the father came home from town he could be heard a mile away, running his horse at break-neck speed and yelling like an intoxicated cowboy.

I often take pride in the fact that I never had to appear in court on trial or as a witness in my life, but while living with this man I came very near having to serve as witness in a cotton stealing "scrape." There were many people, most of them Negroes, who brought farm produce to this farm to exchange for liquor. Sometimes it would be a cow, a hog, chickens, corn or cotton in the seed. During cotton picking time, I slept in the cotton house, the cotton being much more comfortable on cold nights than was my bunk, but at times it would be taken to the gin and I would have to return to my bunk. One night my work-mate and I went to our room because there was not enough cotton on which to sleep, but to our surprise, the next morning the cotton house was nearly full. Of course, this was none

of our business, but we made some remarks about it. We thought nothing more of it until a county officer rode into the field where we were working one day and asked if we had noticed the increase of cotton on the morning mentioned. We told him that we had, so he said that we were wanted as witnesses in a stealing case. It seemed that some colored men had stolen some seed cotton from another colored man and sold the same to my employer. The trial was set for the following week. In the meantime, father and my employer were both working on me. Father said, "Son, whatever you do, tell the truth." My employer warned me not to know anything about it, but I had always been taught to tell the truth and, too, I had already told the officer that I saw more cotton in the house in the morning than there was the night before. My employer had also talked to some of the colored people, stating that if I told anything that would hurt him it would not be so good for me. I became dreadfully frightened and blamed my father for hiring me out to such a man, but thanks to Providence, I was not called to court. Because of some technicality the case was dismissed.

After this harrowing experience, I was fortunately placed with another family which lived nearer our home. The kind of treatment I received at the hands of this man and his wife was a striking contrast to that which I had received from my previous employer. Not until after I began staying with these people did I realize that my name was "Thomas," for, although that is my name, at home I had never been called anything but "Tom." I ate and slept in the home of this white family. My duties were to do general work on the

farm, feed the stock, milk the cows, cut the wood, work around the house, in the house, and nurse the baby when there was any time left. In this capacity I absorbed many items of information and through the kindness of the wife I was taught to read the newspapers. It was my duty to go to the postoffice for the mail and this was my first time to know the name of a daily paper. It is pleasant to recall how this kind lady read the news to me and explained things which I did not understand. She also encouraged me to read the Uncle Remus stories, which were then running in the press in serial form. I frequently carried old copies of newspapers in my pocket while at work. My father occasionally bought a book and subscribed for a few papers but most of them were of a religious nature. I took interest in only one book that he had bought, and that was the "Story of the Bible," which pictured many of the doings and happenings of Bible times.

The wages I earned working for these white people were invariably turned over to my father. In many cases the work that I did was for money that had already been advanced to him. So it did not matter to me whether I worked at home or away from home so far as receiving cash was concerned. The principal advantage in working away from home was that I was privileged to associate with people who had more education than the members of my family. Better food played a large part also.

After Booker T. Washington's famous "Atlanta Address" at the Cotton States Exposition, September 18, 1895, the news spread among colored people throughout my section of Georgia that somewhere in the State

of Alabama at a little town, the name of which very few people could pronounce, there was an institution where poor, yet worthy Negro students could work their way through school. It was following this that I heard the members of this white family reading something about a speech made in Atlanta, Georgia, by a "big" Negro. One day while in the field picking cotton, I asked the boss who this man was and where he lived. He said it was Booker T. Washington, a Negro teacher, who had a school in Tuskegee, Alabama.

In the meantime, my brother, because of the loss of his leg, had managed to solicit the sympathy of a few friends, and was attending a little school at Athens, Georgia, thirty miles away from our home. He, too, heard about the speech that Booker Washington had made in Atlanta. At the close of the term he came home and announced that he had decided to go to the school in Alabama. Father and his friends advised him not to go. They reminded him that he was a one-legged boy, knew no one at this place, and that the best thing he could do was to stay at home so that he could be taken care of, should anything happen to him. Although he had been maimed, that very fact seemed to have whetted my brother's ambition to go on. So with no money except his railroad fare, he took his few belongings in an old leather case, and started for Alabama. We did not expect to see him alive again. In the dead hours of the night before he left, he told me that if I would be patient he would see that some day I would get out from under the "old man," as he called him, and be able to make a man of myself. I took new courage and began working harder, as I felt that some day I

would not have to work as I did without receiving anything for my labor.

My father became interested in a young woman who was teaching school in our community at that time and it was not very long after my brother left for Tuskegee that he married the third time. He then moved back into town and rented a farm in the country.

It was during this time that I received a great deal of encouragement from two sources. This third wife, a school teacher who had taken a course in Spellman Seminary, Atlanta, Georgia, was greatly interested in education. She was entirely in sympathy with me and my desire for an education and began encouraging my father to send me to school. Of course, he made promises but before long I found myself doing the same thing that I had done every year prior to that time—going to school two or three weeks at a time and stopping to perform some duty on the farm. Another source of encouragement came from the last white man for whom I worked before I left home. He would explain to me many things that I did not understand about farming, religion, politics, the Negro race, the white race, and a great many other subjects. His wife was a retired school teacher, and she also gave me much helpful information. I spoke of receiving valuable lessons in farming. This man gave me my first lessons in soil preparation. I had never heard of, nor had I seen land subsoiled until I began working with him. I had never assisted in draining land until then. I had never had the idea of seed selection brought to my mind until I began working for him. It was from him that I received my first instruction in milking cows and caring for gardens. He

taught me how to operate a mowing machine and a hay raking machine. As I look back, the interesting thing about all these operations was his kindness in explaining everything he asked me to do. In most cases, he did the thing himself first to show me just how it should be performed. Father, although a hard worker, seldom took time to explain to me why certain things should be done.

In the summer of 1897, while I was working with this white man, my father received a telegram from Tuskegee stating that his son had fallen ill with a severe stroke of apoplexy and might not live. This, of course, threw a dark cloud over my hopes of ever getting away to school because probable illness was a great excuse at my home among the colored people for not sending their children off to school. They were afraid their children might get sick and die away from home. After my brother recovered from his illness, he returned from Tuskegee, all dressed up. Although minus a leg, he made a wonderful impression on the home folk. He made a number of speeches in and around the community, and having brought back a gramophone, something many of our people had never seen before, he gave a few concerts. After hearing him, many boys and girls were eager to go to school at Tuskegee. I had a confidential talk with him before he returned to school and he in turn, talked with my father who again promised to let me attend Tuskegee. He said that I might leave in time to see President McKinley, who was scheduled to visit the Institute that fall. The "old man" made my trip conditional, however. My brother needed some money with which to return to Tuskegee. He borrowed from father

a few dollars which he promised to send back as soon as he reached Tuskegee. Father told him that the money I was making by working for wages plus the money he was to return might be used to send me to Tuskegee. Father made this statement in my presence, but I had little faith in his promise. My brother told me that it would be all right. He took father at his word and sent a postoffice money order made out to him. At that time I always called for the mail. It might sound a little mean, but one day I recognized in the mail a letter from Tuskegee, opened it and tried to get the money order cashed, but was informed by the postmaster that it would have to have my father's signature. So I took the order home and gave it to him. He told me he would have it cashed, and did so, but that was the last I saw of the money. I asked him where it was. He told me that he had been forced to use it for some urgent needs but would replace it in a few days. My doubts were increased and I was greatly disappointed, but not wholly discouraged, for I had a week's time in which to get ready. I had figured that by the time I was paid for the month I would be able to go to Tuskegee. Things went on in the usual way until about two days before I was supposed to leave. Father had aroused me early to go to work. He and I were hitching up a team. It was a very cold morning. I took the opportunity while we were alone to ask him if I was to be allowed to "leave tomorrow for Tuskegee." He said in a very short way, "What you talkin' 'bout, boy? No, you got no clothes. You got no trunk. I ain't goin' to let you go 'way without clothes and a trunk. When I am ready for you to go, I'll let you know." I had always been very respectful toward

father, but that morning I lost my temper. I began to cry and said, "If I don't get to go now, my time will come." He told me to "dry up" or he would "wear me out." I went to work, but from that day I was fully determined that I would leave home. My faith in my father was lessened. Since I was not to be present at Tuskegee in time to see the President of the United States, I worked right on.

A few days after this unpleasant experience with father, he came to me and said, "Tom, I have been thinking about your going to Tuskegee. You haven't enough clothes and I haven't sufficient money to send you there like you ought to go, and I do not want you to go there like a tramp. I want you to go there looking like somebody. I was just thinking if you would stay here next year I'll give you that piece of land over there and you can have all the cotton it makes. It'll make over three bales and you can have that to go to school next year. I didn't come out like I hoped this year. School will be open before cotton is ready to sell but you can go on and I'll pick it and send the money to you when I sell it." He continued, "Well, what do you say?" I replied, "I'll think about it and let you know in a day or so." "All right, you think about it and let me know," he said. As soon as he had gone, I said to myself, "I will not be here to help make another crop," and I meant it. There was only one thing that gave me concern as to leaving home, and that was my baby sister. She and I were the only two children by father's first wife who were yet at home; the others had grown up and left, including my brother and three older sisters. My baby sister and I had struggled together since I was five

years old. I cared for her when she was too small to care for herself. She and I were devoted to each other. Had it not been for her, I would have left home before that time, because of the many vexing incidents that would have justified the average boy's leaving home. The breaking of friendship between my father and myself was in the early part of December. I worked on through the month, all the while laying plans for leaving at Christmas.

While we were living in town there was something else going on that my father did not seem to realize; namely, I cultivated associates. In most small towns there is always a tough set of boys and my home town was not an exception. I was gradually becoming satisfied with being in the company of these fellows. I recall a little incident which occurred the Christmas before I left home. Although father was neglectful of me along the lines of pleasure and education, he was very strict as to my conduct in case he learned of any misbehavior. A young man, "Hop" Alexander, much older than I, who worked on a farm adjoining the one where I worked, became very friendly with me and at nights would take me with him to churches, parties and to the little colored store, where most of the boys of the town would congregate until twelve and one o'clock at night. One Sunday night during the Christmas week, "Hop" told me that he wanted me to go somewhere with him. We walked about two miles from town to a house situated in a field and somewhat hidden from the road. When we got there, he told the owner that he wanted to get "something." This man showed us into the kitchen and asked us how much we wanted. Alexander told

him a pint. I was told that I would have to pay half. I had never had any experience in this sort of thing, but I paid my half of it just the same. We left this place and walked back toward town. Alexander drank some of the whiskey and handed the bottle to me. I told him that I did not want any of it. He called me a goody-goody and added that I was not a real man unless I could drink liquor. Reluctantly, I took some of it. In a little while I began to feel good; later I felt better, and by the time we had gone quite a distance I felt as if I owned the whole world and was proclaiming the fact in a loud voice. Just as we reached town there was a disturbance caused by a drunken man and woman engaged in a dispute. The woman cursed the man and he slapped her; she cursed him again and he knocked her down; more men took it up and pretty soon there was a lively "scrap." If I had not been under the influence of whiskey, I am sure that I would not have stood and looked at this fight, for at that time of my life I evidently had considerable of the characteristics of a rabbit in me. In the midst of this fight some one said, "The police is coming." We looked down the street and saw someone coming. There was a general scampering in all directions. In leaving the place I became lost from my friend who had taken me there and followed another man. We ran until we reached the woods. By that time I was talking very loudly, so much so that the man told me I would have to keep quiet or we would be caught. I wasn't conscious of my loudness until he had stopped several times to tell me the same thing. Then he tried to lose me by outrunning me. This I did not let him do. Seeing that he could neither get rid of me

nor stop me from talking, he turned abruptly and, thrust in my face one of the biggest pistols I had ever seen. He cursed and told me what he would do if I did not stop talking. I remember telling him, "That's all right, partner. I'll stop." The menace of the ugly pistol sobered me. I followed this man to another road which led back to town. When we reached town he advised me to go home before I got arrested. It was then after 11:00. I do not think that I could have felt any worse than if I had murdered someone. Every one knew my father and I did not know anyone to whom I could expose my shame. I was afraid to stay away from home all night, as I would have had to account for myself.

At home, during Christmas week it was customary for relatives to come and spend the whole week, bringing their children with them. This was the case at my house. My uncle was there with his wife. I got near enough home to ascertain whether or not the people had gone to bed, and to my great disappointment found that they were still up, talking over old times. It was then past midnight. I felt that it would be impossible for me to enter the house without betraying myself; so I sat down in a fence corner for quite an hour and a half. I had heard that if, after drinking whiskey, you blew your breath in woolen goods it could not be smelled. I blew my breath through my coat sleeve for a long time. My head began to ache violently. I was afraid that I might become unconscious, staying out in the cold weather so long, but I could not muster enough courage to go into the house. There was a door opening from the porch into my room, which, when not latched,

permitted me to enter my room without going through my father's. But unfortunately that night, the door I expected to find open was fastened from the inside. I had to call father to open his door and had to go through his room to mine. I played on his sympathy by telling him I had an awful headache. He asked me to come to the fire but I said that I thought I had better lie down. He said, "You're goin' to kill yourself runnin' 'round in the cold. You must take better care of yourself." I went to bed. About an hour later there was a rapid knocking at my door. Father answered. There stood my friend "Hop" Alexander. He wanted to know if I had returned home. Father told him that I had but was not feeling well. I insisted, however, on getting up to say a word to him. When father went back into the house out of hearing, "Hop" told me the whole story of how I missed him in the mix-up; how the man we saw coming up the street was not a policeman but one of the "fellows." I am glad to say that was my first and last experience in drinking whiskey.

It was during the next month that I laid my plans for leaving home for Tuskegee, Alabama. With my two running mates, whom I always included in my plans, I had talked the matter over and finally we made plans for our leaving. I had plenty of ambition, but no money and very few clothes. I had told my companions of my intentions of leaving home on a certain day. They assured me that they were going to do the same thing. After inquiring the distance over the country roads, I finally decided upon the route I would take. I also decided that Monday was a good day upon which to leave. Father, as I have said, was a devoted church

and Sunday School goer and insisted that we follow his example. On this particular Sunday, he requested that each of us, including his wife, prepare for Sunday School. Instead of accompanying them as I usually did, I made it my business not to be through dressing when father was ready, thus allowing everyone to leave the house. I then began to assort and pack my belongings. Not having a trunk, I put my things in an old leather hand bag, the same bag my brother used when he left and which he had sent back to me by express.

My second step-mother was still eager for me to go to school, but father did not seriously consider her pleadings along that line. After packing my belongings and placing them under my bed, I went to Sunday School. At church, I had a very confidential talk with my running mates, Joe Alexander and John Stevens. They both had excuses. Stevens could not possibly get ready within the next week, and Alexander would go if I could wait until Tuesday. The result was that these boys did not leave for school. I have since learned that they had no intention of going to Tuskegee. In connection with my departure from home it is interesting to realize how near my sister came to betraying me. We were gathered around the fireside that eventful Sunday night. Father and the rest of the family were talking. My sister, who was seated in a corner, had always taken a deep interest in me and wanted to know why I put my leather bag under the bed, and what was in it, adding that it used to stay over in the corner. Father was reading and did not look up, so I winked at her, and she understood that I did not wish her to talk. This saved me from having to make an explanation

that might have given away the whole secret. I excused myself very soon thereafter and went to bed.

It was customary for father to call me about four in the morning to make the fires and do the chores around the house before going to the field. When he called me on this particular morning I was already awake, for I had lain awake most of the night thinking over my proposed escape the coming day.

CHAPTER TWO

The Trip to Tuskegee

IT WAS A VERY DARK MORNING, January 2, 1899. I arose, put on my clothes, took my bag and placed it outside the gate. I then brought in a turn of wood and made the fires as usual. I took the water bucket to the well and left it there; and so far as I know it is there yet.

Knowing that I would have considerable start on father in case he tried to overtake me, I went over to the house of a lady, known as Aunt Cynthia Berryman, who always claimed kin to us. I found that she and Uncle Dave were in bed. They asked me what I was doing up so early. I told them that I was going away. Uncle Dave threw the cover back and, sitting up in bed, asked me where I was going. I told him I was going to Tuskegee, over in Alabama. He asked me which way I was going; up the railroad, or down the railroad. I told him I was going up the railroad. He said, "Huh, yer daddy will sho' ketch yer before night, mind what I tell yer." I told him I didn't think so. Aunt Cynthia censured me for not letting her know that I was leaving home, saying that she would have gotten some money from the white folk. She was an old "slavery-time" cook, and much in demand among the aristocratic white people of the town. She said, "I told William he had better send that boy to school; if he didn't, he was gwine ter leave home." She then told her husband to look in her dresser drawer

and get twenty-five cents for me. It was every cent of money she had in the house, she said. This, added to the dime I already had, gave me thirty-five cents in cash. So with my leather bag and with about half an hour to get out of town before daylight, I hurried away.

One interesting thing about my flight from home that morning, as I found out a year or so later in conversation with my brother, was that I walked over the same road that he did when he ran away several years before and stopped in the same town. I feared father might attempt to catch me, so after I had gone beyond the town limits I followed the railroad about a half mile only. Then I took to the "woods." I remember that morning just as distinctly as if it were yesterday. It was cloudy and damp. One could see only a faint outline of the sun through the fog and cloud which dimmed its rising. After that I did not see the sun again during the whole day. A little after sun-up, when I had walked about six miles, I reached the house of a Negro farmer with whom I was acquainted. This man had lived on a farm adjoining us, and I recalled that some months prior, I had sold him a watermelon for which he failed to pay me. So I stopped and reminded him of the ten cents he owed me, and told him I would take that amount in trade, since I was going away. I asked him to give me breakfast and let his wife wrap me a lunch. After I had convinced him and his family that I was really running away from home and was en route to Tuskegee, the meal and a lunch were given me. The lunch consisted of two or three flour biscuits, almost the size of my cap, with fried meat between them. I found that I had little trouble getting favors from

people who knew me, but my difficulties started when I began to get out of reach of my acquaintances.

After leaving this home, I walked until about 9:00 o'clock, as near as I could determine by the sun, for I had no watch. My mind was taken off my burdens when I was overtaken by two old white gentlemen, who were driving a mule hitched to a buggy. They were going in the same direction I was. As they were not driving very rapidly I was able to keep in talking distance with them for several miles. They made good company. The section of country through which I was passing was very rough and hilly, and I had to cross a stream known as Broad River, over which was a high bridge. I remember the comments of these old gentlemen on the height of the river bank. We were winding around a high embankment when one of them, looking down the slope, remarked to the other, "Say Henry, it's mighty deep down thar,' ain't it." The other replied, "You bet your life." "Say, Henry, if a man should drop down thar' he would fall 'hellards' for a while, wouldn't he?" After crossing the bridge, my company left me. I was en route to a town called Harmony Grove, Georgia, the name since changed to Commerce, and they were going in another direction to a place called Carnesville.

By the time we parted it had begun raining. Since it was January the rain was very cold; and I had not gone far before it began pouring down rather heavily upon me; so much so that I felt that I would have to either procure an umbrella or stop somewhere until the rain ceased. I had made up my mind before I left home that I was going to Tuskegee at any conceivable

sacrifice. I thought over the whole situation in a very rudimentary, yet practical way and said to myself that I did not expect to take anybody's things in the sense that a thief would, but if it became necessary for me to tell an untruth to get certain things that I needed I would be somewhat justified in doing so. So I began with the first thing needed, which was an umbrella. I had no money with which to buy one. I approached a cabin on the side of the road and knocked on the door. A little girl came to the door. I asked her where her papa was. She said, "My papa is dead, but my mamma is here." I asked to speak to her. The mother, a very stout, and an excellent type of woman, came to the door. I greeted her and told her that I was going up the road a little distance to visit some of my kinfolk and that I was trying to get there before night, but if I stopped because of the rain, I could not make it. I wanted to know whether she could lend me an old umbrella so I could keep on walking. She said that she did not have a very good one, but I could use the one that she had. I told her that would be all right and to let me see it. She gave it to me and I found that it would suit my purpose. I assured her that in a few days I would pass back that way and bring the umbrella. Of course, the umbrella was never returned and I never did see my benefactor again. The umbrella served a very great purpose that day, in spite of the fact that it rained so hard, and so continuously, that my clothes were soaked through. I made no stops during the whole day except to inquire the direction, although it continued to rain from about nine in the morning until after nightfall. I have on my feet

even now the marks of that day's tramping—corns and bunions.

To my great disappointment, the biscuits that I had taken as part payment for the ten cents had become saturated with water and part of the substance had oozed out into my big home-made jeans coat pocket and there was practically nothing left but two or three slices of meat, which I ate. I had two pairs of socks, one pair of "Sunday" shoes, and a pair of everyday shoes which I was wearing. These were what is known as "Brogans." The tops of them came up about even with the ankle and they were very uncomfortable. It happened that my shoes were well run down and the tops, which were much too short, and allowed sand to work into the shoes. When I stepped into soft places, I dipped up sand and water. This constant friction caused, on my toes and heels, severe bruises which ever since have given me trouble.

I arrived at Harmony Grove, some thirty miles from my home about 4:30 in the afternoon. I had distant relatives there whom I had very little trouble in finding. They were glad to see me, took me in their humble home and made it as pleasant as could be expected. The day following my arrival I was able to walk but very little, for my feet had swollen and were very sore from the long trek of the previous day. My Sunday shoes were too tight, so I lay around the house and treated my feet with tallow and warm water. In two or three days I began looking around for some work, as my money was gone. It will be remembered that this was the cold winter of 1898-99, the coldest that many of us young people had ever experienced. Men, women and children actually froze to death in many parts of

the state. As I look back over the experiences of that winter I wonder that I did not share a like fate.

I stayed with my relatives a week or more but did not meet with any success in securing work. The family consisted of a widow, two sons and a daughter, They had been in Harmony Grove for only four or five months, and I found that the young men were in almost as bad a plight as I. They were kind enough to divide their fare with me, such as they had. But I was not able to pay any board. I walked the streets for days seeking work and begging white people for jobs. I would go to the railroad station and meet the trains, hoping to earn something by carrying bags for drummers. When I failed to make any money, I would stay away from my boarding place to keep from adding to my obligation. The situation made me almost desperate. Such experiences revealed to me why people without money and work are tempted to commit crime and how they feel justified in taking what does not belong to them. I looked grudgingly at people who walked the streets in warm winter clothing. I almost developed a grudge against cows and horses that had good comfortable stalls. I became increasingly embarrassed at my boarding place because the two young men were, as was I, out of work and because the food they shared with me was hardly enough for themselves. One morning, while the ground was heavily covered with snow, I wrapped my feet in crocus sacks and with only a stick for a weapon, went to hunt rabbits. Late in the afternoon I returned with a bag full of rabbits. That night we had a great feast for supper and sufficient was left over for a similar meal the next day.

Although it was after Christmas, there were a few people in that section who had not finished picking cotton. After the snow had melted they offered small amounts per hundred to have it picked. I agreed to work for a white man living near town. When night of the first day came I had not picked enough cotton to pay for a meal. The next day I tried again. At noon, not having any dinner, I went to the kitchen door of the man I was working for and asked his wife if she had any stale food she was planning to throw out. She told me she would go in and see. I shall never forget what she gave me: baked potatoes, butter and biscuits. I have had some pretty good meals since then, but I have never had anything that tasted quite so good and for which I was more thankful than this food which the white lady handed me through the window. Returning to the field I sat on a stump to eat and so thoroughly did I enjoy my meal that I forgot the bitter cold wind which whipped my tattered clothes. As I travel now through many Southern towns I frequently observe, especially in winter, in waiting rooms at railroad stations large crowds of men and women sitting around as if waiting for the trains. In many Southern towns police officers go in, call for a show of tickets and eject all those who have none. I know that most of them are there because they have no warmth at home. Comfortable waiting rooms have served me on many a cold night.

In the midst of this cotton picking adventure, we had another heavy snow storm and the severe cold prevented me from picking any more. I had to seek some other kind of work in order to eat, so I found a job

just out of town where cord wood was to be cut. The man offered fifty cents per cord. This was very encouraging to me, although the snow was very heavy. The big difficulty I had in getting this job was that I did not have an axe. The man wanting the wood cut was afraid to trust me with the price of an axe or to make it possible for me to get one at a hardware store. He was not sure whether I could cut enough wood to pay for the axe in case he procured it for me. However, after persistent begging on my part, he agreed, with much reluctance, to let me have an axe. He feared that he was simply losing that much. I began cutting cord wood and worked with all the energy that I could summon. Even though I was tired and weak from exposure and lack of sufficient food, it was necessary that I keep constantly active because of the biting cold.

The first day I cut nearly two cords of wood. I did not realize how very cold I was during the day, until after I had gotten inside the house. I found that both of my ears had been badly frostbitten. My feet began to swell because of the constant standing in the snow with shoes that had holes in them and afforded little protection. The constant gripping of the axe handle without gloves cramped my hands and it was not until after more than a year that I could entirely straighten my fingers. Despite all this I continued to cut wood, and soon earned enough money to pay for my axe, buy something to eat, pay something on my delinquent board bill and purchase some much needed warmer underwear. When my new employer had enough wood cut I was again out of a job.

In leaving home I had planned not to work any more on a farm, but knowing how to do that kind of work better than anything else, I felt that in my present plight the best thing I could do would be to seek farm work. I went to a white man living a half mile from town and asked him for work. He told me that he did not need a man at that time, as the winter did not seem to be over and he did not wish to hire a man, board him, and have him do nothing. He said, however, that if I knew anything about stone quarrying he would be glad to hire me later on. I assured him that while I knew nothing of quarrying I was willing to learn. He told me that if I returned the next day he would give me a trial as he wanted a man to assist him in his small stone quarry at times and do general farm work.

I vividly remember my first afternoon on this farm. My new employer was a little, old, bow-legged, hairy faced, slightly bent man. The most pleasing thing about him, as I remember him, was his lovable disposition. Otherwise he seemed pretty well used up. As we went down through the woods from his house, he smoking his pipe and I wondering what a stone quarry was like, we finally came to a great hole in the ground from which apparently much stone had been removed. On the north side of the hole the snow from the great blizzard had not yet melted.

He entered a little shop and brought out what I learned afterwards was a hand hammer and a hand drill. He also brought a dry goods box and placed it on top of a rock, using it for a seat. Then he began beating away, lick after lick on the drill, until he had drilled a hole two or three inches deep into the rock.

The operation seemed so easy that I laughed. After this display of self-confidence on my part the old man got up, handed me the hammer and drill and said, "Let me see you do that." I said, "Yes, sir."

With cocksureness I took my seat on the box, placed the drill in the hole that he had made and slightly tapped it three or four times to make sure that my aim was good; then drawing my long arm high over my head, I came down with great force, but instead of hitting the drill as I meant to, I struck the side of it, knocking off a small piece of steel. Seemingly, the whole weight of the hammer hit me on the hand, tearing off the skin. In spite of my pain I attempted to continue. The old man was sorry, yet so tickled that he could not resist the temptation of laughing. But before I could go further he told me to stop.

"That's enough, old boy," he said. "You'll do. I'll hire you. If a man can hit that hard, when he learns to hit steel instead of his hand he will do good work." Although my hand was sore for a few days, I felt that this display of physical courage got me the job. He told me that he had turned off several boys because they did not show any aptitude for learning the work. He said that for a month or more it would be so cold I could do nothing at the quarry and very little on the farm and that about the only service I could render would be to cut wood, make the fires, and feed the stock. In view of this he could offer me but five dollars per month and meals. I accepted this at once because meals with some regularity were the main thing that I wanted.

At least I was at work and for one or two nights I walked back to town to sleep. The going back was all right, but I found that during the severe cold I could not do so well getting out to my work in the morning, so I asked for a place that I might sleep near my work. My employer suggested that I try to spend the nights with a family of colored people living near his house. I secured lodging with them, but did not spend more than one or two nights there. The man of the house was also a victim of poverty. All winter he had been without work, had not been so well, had no money with which to buy sufficient food or receive medical treatment. When I reported the result of my efforts to find lodging, my employer said that he had nothing more to offer me than an outhouse which had no fireplace.

"If it were in the summer you could stay in there, but Tom," he said, "I am afraid you'll freeze to death if you attempt it now." I told him that I would try it. I went to town and borrowed two or three quilts. Then I went to the wood pile and cut two good sized logs and placed them on the floor six or eight feet apart. The lumber pile contributed three or four pieces 1x12 inches about seven feet long. These I placed on top of the two pieces of wood, raising the planks six or eight inches from the floor, thereby making an elevation and a bedstead. Continuing my experiment in bed construction, I went to the barn, took my pocket knife and ripped up old crocus sacks and with a large needle sewed bags into a bed tick. This I filled with wheat straw, and with the borrowed quilts completed my improvised bed. My room was so cold that I did not dare remove my clothes at night. I simply took off my shoes and crawled into the

bed, covering up with everything that I could find. A few days later the good wife of this man gave me an additional old quilt when she saw how badly I needed it. Bathing was out of the question except on Saturday nights or Sunday when I would go to my relatives' house in town for that purpose.

These hardships were so discouraging that I seriously considered both giving up my determination to go to school and returning home. I was desperate but somehow I clung to my resolution, and to my job with Mr. Baugh, the old gentleman who had hired me. After I had worked one month and received my first five dollars, Mr. Baugh informed me that he would have to let me go unless I could agree to work with him one year. In this instance, expedience triumphed over truth and I could not resist the temptation of telling him that I would work a whole year although I knew that within three or four months I would be on my way to Tuskegee. He said, "All right, if you keep on like you are doing I will give you one dollar per day, after the crops are laid by in the summer, to work in the quarry. I am going to give you fifty cents more for next month." I considered myself very fortunate in not having to sign a written agreement with the old gentleman. I paid $4.00 of my first month's wages to my relatives to clear up my back board bill and with one dollar left, I grimly started my second month's work.

In the meantime, winter began to disappear and by the end of the third month, I had my plans all laid out to leave just as I had left my father. I arranged to go on a certain night, but was prevented by not being paid off promptly on the day the month ended;

so I worked on for two or three days. I studied the situation carefully, and kept my plans to myself.

I saw Mr. Baugh hitching up his buggy to go to town one afternoon and said to myself. "This is my last day here." I was sure he would bring back my money from the bank, which he did that night. At sundown I went to the house to perform my regular duties, such as cutting wood, carrying in stove wood, feeding the hogs and horses, and carrying in water. Then I went hurriedly to the shack and put on my Sunday suit. Over that I put my work clothes so as not to arouse any suspicion. I went to supper about 7:00 o'clock. After eating I left the kitchen, taking with me several biscuits with butter and preserves on them. I went to my room, packed them away, rolled up the borrowed quilts in a bundle and made ready to leave.

Another delay seemed imminent because the train on which I was planning to leave was due in town at 9:00 o'clock that night and Mr. Baugh might not pay me before the next morning, so I sat down in my shack in restless anticipation. Finally, I heard him calling from the big house, "Tom, oh Tom!" I answered "Sir." "Come up here a minute." I knew what was coming and was temporarily relieved. He handed me six dollars and complimented me on my work. He also added that he was going to give me another raise of fifty cents and was going to keep on raising me in proportion as I improved. I thanked him kindly but was very nervous at the time, for I thought I heard the train coming. Following me out of doors and looking up at the sky, he said that he thought the bad weather was not quite broken. After giving me instructions for the next day's

work, he said "Good night." I too said "Good night," and walked away, slowly until I heard his door close, when I made a desperate dash for my shack. Throwing off my work clothes I gathered up the quilts and hand bag and hurried out the back way. In getting over the fence either my foot slipped or I stepped on a rotten plank, and judging from the noise it seemed to me that the whole fence must have fallen. This noise aroused the dogs and they started barking. Mr. Baugh came to the door and called, "Tom, is that you? What has happened?" "Nothing," I replied, "I was just playing with the dogs." By the time he came out in the yard I was playing with the dogs to quiet them. Reassured, Mr. Baugh returned to the house and shut the door. Forgetting the dogs which had helped me with my deception I reached for my bag and this time did not risk getting over the fence, but went out the back way that led into the main road several hundred yards above the house.

Just as I came into the road I heard the train whistle for the station a half mile away. It seemed that I had the strength of two or three men, for with the big bundle of blankets under one arm and the cumbersome leather bag under the other, I covered the distance in a very short time. I did not carry the quilts all the way to the station. The people from whom I borrowed them lived on the way to the station. It happened that a window facing the road was open. I rushed into the yard, threw the quilts through the window, said, "Goodbye," and kept running. Just as the conductor signalled for the train to pull out, I crawled in on the steps almost exhausted, for I had climbed a very steep hill leading up to the station.

This terminated what I might call deception number three. First, I slipped off from my father's home on my way to Harmony Grove. Second, I borrowed an umbrella from a kind woman and failed to take it back to her, and third, I made a contract with Mr. Baugh to work with him for a year, knowing that I would not be there longer than it took me to earn my railroad fare from that point to Tuskegee.

A day or two before I left the little Georgia town a great cloud of disappointment came over me, for I received a post card from my brother who was at Tuskegee, saying that possibly I had better wait until next fall to come as the smallpox was raging there. He said I could come in but could not go out, once I came in. I thought over the situation, but as I had never heard of smallpox, I wrote him that I did not mind the smallpox since they were small, and that I was coming.

This being my first time away from home, I recalled warnings I had heard, among which was one that you could not afford to trust persons whom you did not know. Exciting last moments at the home of Mr. Baugh, and the foot race to the train with my heavy bundles, left me warm, and wet with perspiration. I therefore pulled off my coat and sat by a raised window in the car. A woman passenger said to me, "Young man, you had better put on your coat; you are doing a dangerous thing. I saw you come in. You are wet with perspiration; you'll be sick."

I thanked her, put my coat on and shut the window. After making two escapes I had by this time become suspicious to the extent that I had decided not to answer many questions of strangers. This lady was some-

what inquisitive and asked me where I was going. I told her I was going to the next town, which was Athens, Georgia. She asked me if I did not have a brother. I replied I had. She told me the name of the person whom I resembled. I told her that was my brother. She asked me my name, which I gave her, adding that I was going to Tuskegee where my brother was. She told me that she was well acquainted with him and wished me good luck. Before we got to Athens she asked me how long I would be in the town. I replied that I intended leaving that night. It was then about 10:00 o'clock. She informed me that I would have to stay in the station from that time until 3:00 o'clock the next morning, adding that it was not safe for a stranger. Her warning gave me much concern. She offered to take me to her house and call me the next morning in time for me to catch the train, which was, as I now see it, a very kind and thoughtful gesture, but I was suspicious of her. I had encountered and overcome too many hardships to risk getting into a predicament which would prevent my getting to Tuskegee. Finding it difficult, however, to decline, I accepted her offer, but as we started to walk toward her home, two great fears possessed me. One was that if I remained at the railroad station and perchance fell asleep, someone might rob me. The other was that this woman, whom I did not know, might be taking me to some place where someone might do me harm. All the time as we walked along, I was thinking and planning some scheme to slip away. Fortunately, she stopped by a friend's house to get something. I saw a hack approaching. I asked the driver if he would let me go to the station with him. He agreed and I crawled into the

hack, and without ceremony left my benefactor. This was deception number four.

I sat in the station but did not fall asleep, and at 3:00 o'clock when I saw the light of the locomotive away down the track, I was greatly relieved.

By sunrise the next morning I was in Atlanta, Georgia. There were problems yet confronting me, however. I had not been sure just what the fare from Harmony Grove, Georgia to Tuskegee, Alabama was, and I was afraid I did not have enough money to get there. I bought a ticket from Harmony Grove to Atlanta. Somebody had told me that the fare from Atlanta to Tuskegee was $5.00. I was almost afraid to ask the ticket agent what the fare was, fearing that he would say $5.00, which was more than I had. But I finally mustered up enough courage, went to the ticket office, and asked the fare. I was so anxious that he name a price within the bounds of the $4.78 I had, that when he told me the fare was $4.58 I snapped my fingers and shouted, "Good!" I bought my ticket to Tuskegee over the Atlanta and West Point Railway and had twenty cents left.

During the night I ate the few biscuits that I had taken from Mr. Baugh's table over in Georgia. At breakfast time I was very hungry, so I bought five cents worth of bananas, with which I intended to make out until I completed my trip to Tuskegee. To further add to my discomfort the train conductor brought into the Negro coach a very full basket of breakfast, and after turning two seats to make a table, began to eat. From the restless manner in which I kept moving about the car and the questions I asked him, he evidently

sensed that I was a very green traveler, and he must have judged also from my appearance that I was almost starved. When he had finished eating he beckoned me to come to him. He asked me if I wanted some breakfast. I said: "Yes, sir." "Well, clean up here for me then," and I did just what he told me to do: I cleaned up!

After we had traveled past several stations he asked me to carry his basket of dishes to a restaurant, which I did gladly, for I would have done anything in my power for him in return for his kindness.

When the colored porter called out the little station, "Chehaw, change cars for Tuskegee," I mistook the word for "Geehaw." The conductor continued his kindness to me and saw to it that I did not, in my eagerness, get off the train before it stopped. He pointed out to me the coach on the other track and told me goodbye, saying, "That train will take you to the school and Booker T. will take care of you when you get there."

When I arrived in the town of Tuskegee, I stood on the platform and looked around me. A young man by the name of Barksdale, who at that time was "freight boy" for the school, beckoned me to him. I can see his face now, just as plainly as I did that very day. He had been a victim of smallpox and his face bore the markings of the disease. He asked me if I knew that there was smallpox at the school. I told him I had heard of it. He asked me further if I did not have a brother in school. I replied that I did. He said he thought so, because I surely resembled him. "Now you can do one of two things. You can go out there and enter, and not

go outside, or you can stay outside in town until the quarantine is raised," he said. I had no idea of what a quarantine was. I imagined that it was something like a huge wall with gates, and when Barksdale spoke of raising it, I had in mind that the gates would be raised at a certain time when I would be admitted.

Barksdale called to another man, a hack driver, and told him to take me to the quarantine line. This man took me up to the place where the old "Varner Mansion" now stands in the Grove. I saw several young men in uniform, some lounging on boxes, others walking back and forth across the road. They had posts up and lines stretched across the road. When we arrived there, one of them asked if I wanted to come in. I replied that I did. He untied the line and let me in after explaining the conditions under which I might enter. Just as I stepped inside the line and turned to go away, the man who drove me up in the hack said, "Say, young fellow, you haven't paid me for bringing you up from the station. The fare is twenty-five cents." I said to him, "I did not know that I was to pay anything." While I did not know much about quarantine, I sensed its advantage at this moment. I knew the irate driver could not cross the line because guards were standing nearby. I told him I would see him later and walked away holding on to my fifteen cents. He told me that he would get me, but I didn't think he could. Deception number five put me on the school grounds about the twenty-sixth of April, 1899.*

* See Appendix—Letter No. 1.

CHAPTER THREE

Tuskegee at Last

THE FIRST PERSON I SAW at Tuskegee was a young lady. She was coming across the campus. I asked her where Phelps Hall was and she pointed out the building, which still stands. I called for my brother and the man who came to the door, a teacher in the building, told me that he was in class. After class brother came out and was as glad to see me as I was to see him. Immediately we went to his room and he showed me how to prepare for dinner. I say "prepare," for in my case I needed much assistance along that line. He contributed some of his own clothes, including a collar and tie, and had me shine my shoes. Then I went down to dinner with him. The first impression I got of Tuskegee was such that, although I had suffered much during the winter, I felt that I would rather be on the farm doing hard work than here getting the kind of food that was served me: heavy corn bread, known as "squares," and a little syrup in a saucer, and some salad greens cooked with little or no meat.

I was sent by my brother the next morning to the registrar, who wanted to know what trade I wished to take. I told him that I would like to be a wheelwright, or a blacksmith, or a carpenter. He inquired if I did not want to take farming. I told him promptly that I had worked enough on a farm and did not care to learn anything more about it. He then asked me if I would

like to take agriculture. I said that I thought I would like that very well. So he assigned me to the livestock division. Imagine my surprise when I learned that agriculture was farming.

Having been assigned to my work, I went with my brother to the Academic Department to take examination. Up until that time, I thought I was pretty well informed, but somehow or other that evening all of my arithmetic, grammar, geography, reading and writing seemed to run together. As a result of the examination my brother was handed a slip of paper the next day with just one word typed upon it, "Unclassified," which meant that there was no class low enough in the institution for me. However, I did not take this half as seriously as my brother seemed to take it, and quite undisturbed, I went on to my work. I neglected to say that my brother directed me to the hospital where I was vaccinated, which at that time seemed to me to be one of the most foolish things imaginable.

The first work that I did at Tuskegee was at the horse barn. The instructor, (now deceased), in charge was named W. J. Claytor and I feel greatly indebted to him for his kindness to me, in view of the fact that I was a new student. Mr. Claytor gave me a rake the first morning and told me to rake up the yards around the carriage room and the barn. I figured that I would be through raking in an hour or so but as I remember I raked steadily for two days. My next job was to whitewash fences and barns inside and outside. It seemed to me that I whitewashed everything on the campus.

I had never done any whitewashing before that time, and it made me pretty sick. Mr. Claytor would come

around and ask how I was getting along. I would tell him I was getting on all right, but that I was mighty tired. Once he laughed and said, "Go ahead, young man; you will wear diamonds some day." After he found out that I really would stick to a task, he began to give me lighter jobs, one of which was to haul cord wood to the brick yard.

In one or two months, with the encouragement of my brother, I felt myself pretty well broken in at Tuskegee. I think that the hardest thing I found to adapt myself to was the changing of clothing on coming from work, and dressing for meals. For a few weeks, I roomed in the attic of Phelps Hall. Then my instructor, Mr. Claytor, had me removed to a small room built for the carriage boys at the barn.

My brother was a student barber on the school grounds and in this way aided himself and me. It will be remembered that when I arrived at Tuskegee I had but fifteen cents. The entrance fee was at that time one dollar, which he paid for me. The hack fare I owed the man who brought me from the station to the quarantine lines was also paid by my brother. For my failure to pay the driver I received a severe scolding which I did not soon forget. All this time I was "unclassified," but I was studying very hard to make a class.

During the latter part of May and the first of June I worked very hard, hauling wood from the surrounding swamps to the brickyard and brick from the yard. My brother was to spend his summer at Tuskegee and it was at this time that another epidemic broke out —typhoid and malaria. Five young men students died

within two weeks. The fevers became so serious among the boys that some of them were known to have slipped away at night from the school. Brother was among the unfortunates who died. His untimely death was a staggering loss to me, for I considered him the best friend I ever had.

One Sunday evening during his illness, he rallied and was allowed to sit up on the porch of the building now known as "Parker Cottage," but which was used that summer as a hospital. I sat with him and we talked for a long time. "Tom," he said, "I don't think I am going to get well. If I die I want to be buried at Tuskegee." Then he asked me to take a pencil and notebook and write down some business items he wanted me to look after for him. I tried to comfort him by telling him that he was looking better, but he shook his head and said, "But I don't feel like it." With tears in my eyes I arose and started away. He called me back and added, "Tom, I want you to stay here a long time before you go home. I want you to know something when you go back home." He smiled when I told him how well I was getting along with my work and that I had hauled more loads of wood than some of the other fellows. He said that was good. I was still standing, but about to go when he said, "Tom, I might not live to see you through school, but wherever you go and whatever you undertake to do, don't let anybody do more of that work than you do." To my great sorrow this was the last opportunity I ever had to talk with him, for the next week I, too, was stricken with the fever.

During this illness I had an experience which I relate with some reluctance. At the time there was a physician at Tuskegee who was very rough and impatient in dealing with student patients. When I felt this dreaded illness coming upon me, I went to the hospital for aid. Finding the doctor out, I asked a nurse to put me to bed. When the doctor came in later and found me there, he asked in a very rough tone, "And what are you doing here? There's nothing the matter with you. Get up from here and get out. You came in here just because your brother is sick." I took his statement for a joke at first, but he came back the second time and impressed upon me that he was not joking, saying that if I did not get up and put my clothes on, he would take a board to me.

I got up and went to my room, but two days later, a vehicle was sent to take me back to the hospital. When I arrived this same doctor took my temperature. Upon reading the thermometer, he shook his head and gave the nurse orders to put me to bed at once. He remarked, "He has the same thing his brother has and this time tomorrow he won't know whether he's in heaven or hell." Anyone can imagine my feelings at that time—I with a high fever, and my brother desperately ill, and to the point of unconsciousness. For nine days I was very sick, part of the time delirious. I afterwards learned that I was sent from the hospital to my room earlier than was safe, because of the expected death of my brother. When he died the registrar was sent to inform me. It all seems like a dream now—for at the time I was as weak as a child from the effects of the fever.

With reference to the treatment of the students by this physician, Doctor Washington called in all the survivors and had them testify before a committee as to just how they had been treated during this siege of illness. I was one of the witnesses, and I related my story word for word. This was in the latter part of August. I had been informed by this same doctor, before the committee was sent out to investigate his treatment of the students, that I had better leave school. In conversation with me one day, he asked if I had any money. I told him that I had none. He said, "Well, you had better try to get hold of some, at least enough to get away from here. You will never be any good to yourself or to anyone else, and you cannot enter school next term when it opens." At this time I felt that my whole life was a failure. I felt as though some great invisible being were whipping me for having run away from home; I had been at Tuskegee just a little more than three months, my brother had died, and now, according to this doctor, I was too feeble to remain in school. I wished that I had died with my brother, or had never been born. All I had to depend on was my strength and even that had failed me. However, through the kindness of my instructor at the barn, I was given some light work to perform. The climax of my dejection was reached the day when all students who had remained at Tuskegee for the summer were excused from their work to register for the fall opening. I entered the doctor's office with fear and trembling, because he had already told me that I would not be permitted to enter school, or that at least he would not sign my health certificate.

My being at Tuskegee until the time for the opening of school was due to the kind words and interest of a man whom I learned in after years to love and revere as a father. After I was again able to be up, I drove the carriage to the station at Tuskegee one day to meet a passenger whom I did not know. He asked me if I was related to Willie Campbell. I replied that I was. He expressed his sorrow upon hearing of the death of my brother and told me what a good man he was. I told him that I too had suffered a bad spell of sickness; that when I recovered I was called in and had testified against the doctor, and that he had told me that I could not enter school. This kindly man, the Reverend C. O. Booth, one of the school's spiritual advisers at the time, offered me, as my brother had done, some very helpful suggestions. He said, "My dear young man, the greatest trouble with you is that you are discouraged. My advice to you is to stay right here at Tuskegee. There is no need of your leaving because your brother died. People are dying every day and everywhere. You are just as likely to die away from here as you are here. Although you have lost your brother, you cannot afford to let that stop you. You should try all the harder to take up where he left off."

After my talk with Doctor Booth, my determination was renewed. My only barrier was to get a health certificate. This our resident physician refused to issue. I went to the registrar and asked him to permit me to enter school. He said that he could not do it, unless I had from the doctor a certificate regarding my health. I shall never forget my feelings that day. The registrar was busy seeing a large number of boys and girls, and

because of this fact he did not have time to listen to the story I wanted to tell him. He asked me to pass on, saying that he would possibly be able to see me the next day. I went into the hall with tears in my eyes, but I was determined to be heard.

I sought the treasurer and told him my story. He sent me, with a note, to a white physician in the town of Tuskegee, asking him to examine me thoroughly and send him a report. I remember that as I walked to town carrying that letter, I felt as though I had my own death warrant. The doctor recognized me, as he had attended my brother during his illness; and the first impression I got from him was that he was a very kind man. He asked me to sit down, then expressed his sorrow that my brother had died. He told me that he was glad to see me up after my attack of malaria, and hoped that I would soon be strong. After he read the note from the treasurer, he told me that he did not think it would be necessary for me to undergo a thorough physical examination. He said that I had simply had a case of fever and was weak from the attack. He told me to go back to the school, tell the treasurer to let me in if possible, and, if I was not admitted, to come back to town, where he would give me some light work until I was strong enough to reenter school.

On my way back from town, I chanced to meet the commandant. He stopped me and said, "Young man, come here. What are you doing?" I told him that I was trying to get in school. He asked me where I had worked. I told him at the horse barn. He suggested that I go to my instructor and ask him for a letter of recommendation as to my deportment and work

and that I bring the report to him at once. This I did, and then I went to the treasurer, to whom I made a verbal report of what the doctor had said. Such kindnesses on the parts of the white doctor, the commandant, and the treasurer, were to me delightfully reassuring. I went back to my work feeling somewhat at ease.

Another handicap I had to overcome was some unsolicited advice given by students, many of whom had been at Tuskegee a number of years. For instance, one said, "If I were you, I'd leave here." Another said, "Since you have testified against Dr. ——, I don't think it is safe for you to stay here, for you are bound to go to the hospital for treatment now and then, and if you do, he might take advantage of you."

A few days later I was sent for by the registrar, and was taken in school. I found out afterwards what happened. The treasurer and the commandant took my case with reports from the white physician and my instructor to the Executive Council, the governing board of the Institute. Mr. Washington did not know me but was acquainted with my brother. Inquiring of me and summing up the reports in the case, he instructed the registrar to admit me without the usual health certificate. Upon entering school I was enrolled in what was known as the Sub-C Preparatory Class of the night school. I give here a copy of my grades for the fall term, 1899, my first record; November 30, Arithmetic A, Geography A, Reading A, Language B plus, Nature Study B plus, Spelling B, Labor B. Signed: J. D. McCall. In the grading system used at that time, A indicated excellent and B, good. I was promoted in

the middle of that term to the C Preparatory Class, making the honor roll for the second quarter; this meant that I had earned A in all of my subjects. During this time my health was steadily improving. By the close of the school year I had in the treasury a credit of $68.00, earnings from my work. I procured an excuse from the school for the summer and went out to work. Along with ten or fifteen other young men I went to a town fifteen miles from Tuskegee, known as Tallassee. At that time a company was building a concrete dam across the Tallapoosa River, preparatory to furnishing electricity to the City of Montgomery. It employed a large number of men. The crew that went from Tuskegee was sent eight miles above the dam site to clear off the forest. We had a tough time. Most of the fellows who went with me had never been out on such work before. We did not know what to carry, in the way of clothing and bedding, and worst of all, most of us had nothing to carry. Very few of us had suit cases. As for my part, I carried my belongings in a clothes bag.

We reached our destination about sundown. The site was at least two or three miles from any dwelling. The company had sent us up into the hills by wagon and had advanced us a week's provisions, as none of us had any money with which to buy food. Our first night's experience was very discouraging. Fortunately, we had one or two fellows in the party who could cook; the rest knew very little about it. The driver who carried us into these woods had told us that everything necessary for camping had been put into the wagon, but to our sorrow when the outfit was unpacked there was

only one tent in it, hardly large enough for two cots. No one seemed to know what to do, until an old colored soldier, who had served in the Civil War, came to our aid.

First, he had us make fires and prepare supper. As it was summer time we thought there was little danger of catching cold. Under his instruction we put up the tent, but found that we did not have a single cot, and only one or two blankets for the whole crew. We cut down pine brush and covered the ground inside of the tent, and all lay down with our heads under the tent and our feet sticking outside. We were terribly jammed and packed that night. In the scramble I got my head from under the tent and was aroused in the middle of the night by rain falling in my face.

Early the next day the white overseer came into the camp and began assigning us our work. He was a very friendly man, and expressed himself as being greatly pleased at having so many fellows from Tuskegee to work. He cautioned us about our health and expressed a desire that we would all be able to "make" the summer up there in the woods with him. In the matter of preparing our food, the first thing we did was to employ one of our number who had some knowledge of cooking to prepare our meals, each man paying so much per week for rations. This was not satisfactory because some of the fellows ate less than others and they did not feel disposed to help feed the big eaters. In other words, those who ate the least decided that they could eat more cheaply, so our little cooking organization broke up after the first week.

It then became the duty of each person to do his own cooking, which necessitated each man's buying cooking utensils, consisting of a frying pan, knife and fork, spoon, tin plate, and a pail in which to carry his meals. As to sleeping, we finally obtained two tents, and were thus enabled to sleep under shelter. In view of the fact that most of the fellows were hardened by this time we did not invest anything in bedding. We drove forked sticks into the ground and placed on them cross pieces, making a sort of scaffold arrangement, upon which was placed pine straw. This completed our preparations for sleeping except for the fact that one or two of the fellows had been lucky enough to "swipe" blankets from the commandant's department at Tuskegee and smuggle them away in their clothes bags. We thought that the nights would not be so cold, but our guess was wrong. Six or eight of us would lie across the blankets and try sleeping close together to keep warm. We slept in our work clothes. Unfortunately our tents leaked and when the big rains came, it was an amusing sight to see the fellows who happened to possess umbrellas, lying on their bunks, with their umbrellas stretched over them, trying to keep the rain out of their faces.

The cooking arrangements went from bad to worse. In our number were some fellows who were originally from the city and some from the country. Had it not been for the presence of country boys among us, I feel that we would have had to break up camp, or employ a woman as cook, because the preparing of meals became so distasteful to some of us that the majority got to the point where we cooked but once a day. At first we

cooked supper when we returned to the camp after the day's work, and in the mornings we cooked breakfast and dinner. Later the preparation of breakfast began to interfere with the late sleepers, so we developed a practice of preparing the whole day's meals at one time. We would come into the camp from work, prepare supper and cook enough for breakfast and dinner for the following day. This method saved time, all right, but it began to disturb our digestion. I, for one, began to weaken under the strain; so this had to be changed.

It was not convenient to attend church that summer. We were so isolated that we seldom heard a rooster crow and our Sundays were spent in the camp. For our Sunday program most of us usually slept until eight or nine o'clock and, with the exception of the stingy ones, we would try to have a good meal that day. About the best dish in the form of dessert which we could get would be a mixture of stewed blackberries, sugar and flour, which we called "bog-up." Occasionally, we would get hold of some beef or some fortunate one would catch a fish or two from the river. There, of course, was never enough to go around. After the Sunday breakfast, we would go, with soap and towels, to the nearest stream where we would bathe and do week-end laundering. We would then return to the camp and during the remainder of the afternoon, some would study, some would read, and others would rehearse orations. The musically inclined would often sing until twilight, when all of us would assemble around an improvised table of boards nailed up between trees, and there we would have our chapel services.

Our work consisted of cutting down the trees over the area to be inundated. We worked on both sides of the Tallapoosa River and were paid $1.00 per day. Aside from malaria and mosquitoes, there was rarely any discomfort among us which we could not manage. Each Saturday afternoon we walked six or eight miles down the river to procure our coming week's rations from the company commissary. I shall never forget how tiresome was that long trip, especially the return, when we were laden with our supplies, carried in sacks swung over our backs. Some of the fellows who were not so strong would stop for the night along the way and sleep in the woods, arriving at camp the next morning. The majority of us put up with this kind of life all summer, although there were a few, not willing to undergo the hardships, who left.

The Tuskegee boys were moved, in the latter part of the summer, to another section in close proximity to a camp of regular Negro public workers and it was here that I got some real experience among rough men and women. There were frequent tilts between the men and women because one man would take another's "woman" or a woman would take another's "man." On one occasion when two of the men were arguing about a woman, the argument became so intense that one hit the other with his banjo, striking him with the hoop-end, the bursting of which sounded like the report of a gun. The force of the lick caused the strings to cut into the man's shoulder. Later on I saw two women in a fight about their "man." Both had razors. They first pulled each other's hair and then began cutting, one making an ugly gash above the eye, down through the cheek

and around under the the chin, while the other made a frightful wound right through her opponent's breast, laying it open. Of course, there were no arrests; it was simply a camp affair, and no one except the victims took it seriously.

In most cases when such fights began everybody in camp turned out to see the "fun" and rarely did anyone interfere. Sometimes a ruffian would come into the camp drunk and, without provocation, begin shooting. Occasionally, the "walking boss" or the overseer would be called in to settle differences; but an officer of the law seldom came into the camp. I suppose that in some instances they were afraid.

We returned to Tuskegee in the fall with a little money. I had enough with which to purchase a uniform, a civilian suit, one or two pairs of shoes, some underwear, and had a few dollars left, which I put in the bank. This being my first summer out from Tuskegee, I was not sure that I could save anything, but after this season I took courage and developed a great deal of confidence in my ability to support myself while in school.

Up to this time, I had received but few letters from my father. On one occasion I wrote him to send me five dollars to purchase some much needed clothing. I received an early reply in which he did not mention the money until he reached the end of the letter. He said, "My son, I note that you need some money to buy some clothes, but I cannot spare it just now. I might be able to help you sometime later, but just trust in the Lord and He will carry you through." This was

not very encouraging when the clothes were so badly needed.

An occasion still fresh in my memory shows how I gained my first impression of the practical side of education. I was driving a carriage in which some visitors were riding with the Chaplain of the Institute. I asked him where the visitors came from. He replied that they were from St. Louis. I remarked, "Oh, I see, St. Louis, Montgomery." He corrected me and added that I had better learn to apply my knowledge of geography. I had studied geography rather diligently, I thought, and could answer any number of questions, bound states, trace rivers, locate and name capitals. But it was a long time after I left Georgia before I connected my book knowledge with the fact that I had really moved into another state. I resolved that day that I would learn the names of places and cities with relation to their states. This was a valuable lesson in geography.

My association with other students was such that although I had less than most of them, so far as clothing and money were concerned, I kept so busy at work that this worried me on exceptional occasions only, such as the night school holiday, then called the work students' holiday, the Commencement, Christmas, and New Year's Day. At other times my condition did not seem so very bad, since I managed to have a uniform and a work suit. But when these holiday socials came, a nice suit was much to be desired, for the young men and women were permitted to spend a few hours together. I was embarrassed many times when my tablemates would decide to club in and get a present for the

waitress. Almost invariably, I had nothing to contribute. Sometimes, in order to save myself the humiliation, I would remain away from the dining hall at regular meal hours on the pretense of doing extra work, and would ask my instructor to issue me a ticket to late meals.

The close of the next term found me again out of money and clothing, so I decided that I would go back to the Tallassee dam to work. There was a young fellow, a schoolmate by the name of Johnson, who during the term had manifested a great interest in me, so much so that I took him to be an intimate friend. Shortly before school closed, Johnson and I decided to take a crowd of fellows over to the dam, as the company had offered a special inducement in the form of extra cash to the one of us who brought a crowd of good strong men. So I told Johnson my plans and laid them all out before him, thinking he was the best one in whom to confide. I expected him to tell me his but he told me he had not decided what he was going to do, and that possibly he would remain at Tuskegee for the summer. I thought no more of the matter until school closed. Then I began packing, which was a very simple thing, because it consisted only in finding some place to leave my small dilapidated trunk, taking a few work clothes in a bag, and borrowing a blanket and some sheets from the commandant's department.

The day came for me to go, or at least the day came for me to tell the people goodbye, because my method of departure, had it been known, would have exposed to everybody at Tuskegee my true financial plight. The night before I went to the dining hall, where I told my

schoolmates goodbye. Many asked me when I expected to leave. I sought my teachers too and told them goodbye. I told them that my plans were to leave the following day. This done, I requested the guard to call me at midnight and returned to my room.

I had notified the fellows who were to go with me where to meet. We were all there at the appointed time, ready to begin our journey on foot. I had forgotten Johnson, thinking that he would remain at Tuskegee during the summer. After we had gone a few miles, a storm came up. Somewhere near 2:00 o'clock in the morning, we stopped in a little shed until the rain lessened. When the storm was over we resumed our journey, reaching our destination about 10:00 the next morning. In the afternoon we saw another small band coming over the hill afoot. Imagine our surprise when we discerned that it was Johnson and his crowd. He had attempted to outwit me and reach the company office before I did, so as to get first consideration. I found out later what thwarted his plan. He had learned that I was to leave at midnight or a little later, so he left at ten, intending to travel a few miles, stop and sleep until near day, then resume his journey. As closely as I can estimate, we passed a vacant house where Johnson and his men slept, about 3:00 in the morning. I was told by one of the party that Johnson himself overslept and failed to arouse them until near sunrise.

We reported to the company office only to learn that they did not have enough work to last the whole summer, so, rather than begin on a job that would last but a month, we conferred among ourselves and decided to go to another job in the southern part of the state,

where a new railroad was being built. I arranged with a labor agent for transportation to this better job. We went there and worked the entire summer on the construction of this railroad. I soon made friends with the contractor who became interested in me and gave me extra work.*

When heavy rains prevented the use of the teams on the grade, the contractor would allow me to slope banks, and on Sundays he gave me a job as helper in the field blacksmith shop, where tools were repaired for the next week's work. He took special interest in me after he learned the story of my struggle to make money to continue my education.

My main objectives for the summer were to have my teeth fixed, buy a new suit of clothes, sufficient underwear and footwear, and save enough money to pay my entrance fee in school. I was successful in getting the dental work done. This was the first time in my life that I had had my teeth filled. Before I had gone to dentists merely for extractions. But this operation dug so heavily into my resources that after I had purchased a few clothes, I barely had enough money to pay my entrance fee. This meant that immediately upon my return I was forced to look for extra work as usual.

After doing public work as a common laborer for three summers, I learned first; that it was hard to save enough money to pay board and lodging while away, and to buy clothes, pay railroad fare and the required entrance fees upon returning to school; second, there

* See Appendix—Letter No. 2.

was a tendency on the part of my associates and myself to consider staying out of school for a year to make money. Fearing that I might become too much attached to camp life, I decided the following summer to remain at Tuskegee. I obtained work on the school farm and served in the various divisions where I tried to the utmost to be proficient and dependable. When school opened in the fall I secured a job at the Institute dairy, where I milked fourteen cows twice daily. Arising at 2:00 o'clock, I did my morning work, went to late breakfast and then to day school. At 3:30 in the afternoon I again milked the cows and after that prepared my lessons for the following day. I was also a member of the Institute choir. Thus, all my time was taken up in some form of school activity. The problem of clothing was, with me, always difficult. In the first place I was tall and my feet were too large for me to accept an occasional offer from some of my roommates, permitting me to wear their clothing. Then too, even though I was poor, pride often prevented me from accepting such favors. I received only one Christmas box, one suit of clothes, and two dollars in cash from home during my seven years as a student at Tuskegee.

I rarely ever had more than one shirt at a time, but I washed and ironed it at night and in this way was able to keep fairly presentable. I learned how to cut hair and shave my fellow students—or at least practiced on them till I knew enough about it to do barbering for male teachers. In this way, on Saturday nights and Sunday mornings I was able to make considerable cash. I was fortunate in getting a shoe company to let me serve as its agent on the campus and for every six

orders sent in, I got a pair of shoes for myself. Occasionally, I was invited to dinner at the homes of families whom I served as carriage driver, especially at Christmas time and other holidays, but I rarely ever accepted because of the lack of suitable clothing. Then too, I somehow wanted to be left alone with my troubles, as it seemed that most of the other students had somebody to whom they could look for help.

While working on various jobs in the agricultural department, I always got a great deal of inspiration when Dr. Washington came around on his regular morning visits. We felt honored when he stopped and asked us what we were doing, and why. I confess it was a long time before I became reconciled to the fact that common ordinary work on the school farm, such as I had been used to back in Georgia, had anything to do with education. Then too, my lot was made more difficult because of the prevailing sentiment among the students that all the curricula activities of the Institute carried with them the element of trade or profession except agriculture. Dr. Washington knew how unpopular the subject of farming was among both teachers and students, in the earlier days of the school; so he often emphasized, in his Sunday evening talks, the importance of developing rural life among the Negroes of the South. During these services he often asked all the students of agriculture to stand. I was among those who did not like to stand and did not do so until I had overcome some of my prejudices against country life. There were a few instructors in other departments of the school who sought to punish their students for misdemeanors by assigning them to work on the school

farm. This, of course, served to minimize the importance of agriculture in the minds of the young people.

Custom and environment in my home community had schooled me in the idea that all work other than farming could be done only by white people. But when I reached Tuskegee and observed such activities as sawmilling, brick-making; the construction of houses, carriages, wagons and buggies and the making of tin utensils, harness, mattresses, brooms, clothes, shoes—all done by Negroes, it was to me like entering a new heaven, and I could scarcely believe that such things were possible. Then too, there was freedom of speech and action among the students that was beyond my comprehension. Tuskegee was truly a city of refuge, and the old plantation melodies, "I'll Bid Ol' Hell a Long Farewell," and "I'll Never Turn Back No More," which we sang in Georgia, were given a new meaning to me.

My opportunity to see Dr. Washington close up was in the capacity of driver of his buggy. I looked after the pair of horses which were kept for his special use. The thing that impressed me most about him was that he seemed to use every moment of his time. The following routine is typical of the way he utilized to the fullest almost every moment. I would receive orders to be at his residence at 6:55 in the evening to drive him to the railroad station at Chehaw, a distance of five miles, that he might catch a 7:30 train. Even though it took thirty minutes of hard driving to make the trip he would not leave until the time stated. Frequently, even though leaving at that late hour, he would be found in his office and would remain there until about ten minutes before time to leave the grounds. Such close schedules

meant that my horses, harness and buggy had to be ready and in first-class condition at all times.

The horses were always foaming with sweat when we reached the station, and usually the train was pulling into the station when we arrived. Dr. Washington literally hated to wait for anybody or anything. When the horses slowed down, he would say, "Drive on, drive on." And he never wasted words. I often met him at the station as he came in on the midnight train from New York. At that hour there were no lights at the station, so I was instructed always to carry a lantern with me. As soon as he stepped off the train, he would call me and without delay would get into the buggy. "All right, let's go," he would say, and as we left the station with the horses in a trot he would ask, "How are things at the school?" I would answer, "All right, Sir." "Has there been any rain here lately?" To this I would answer "Yes, Sir," or "No, Sir," as the case would be. By that time we might be quite half way home. Then he would say "Let them go ahead." These questions asked, there would be no further conversation between Chehaw and Tuskegee. Upon arrival at home, he would hand me a coin and say, "Thank you; good night." I recall that on some occasions Dr. Washington took the reins himself and drove. I felt sorry for the horses.

While I was serving in this capacity, it was my privilege to drive him and many distinguished visitors about the campus. I would hear him discuss with these friends white and colored, some of the big and grave problems confronting Tuskegee and the Negro race. At all times I was impressed with the spirit of unselfishness in the attitude of this great man. I shall ever value my early

association, in this humble capacity, with Booker T. Washington.

Approaching my last two years at Tuskegee at the age of twenty-one, I began to think definitely on what I wanted to do as my life's work. I was sure by this time that it was to be some form of agriculture. I had eliminated all dreams of becoming a blacksmith, wheelwright, tailor, or brickmason. That summer, having made up my mind, I was asked by Tuskegee Institute to take charge of a farm in the state, which was owned by a white farmer. This job was eagerly accepted, as I wanted to try out some of the many things I had learned at Tuskegee. I was informed that I was expected to take full charge, as the owner worked in a near-by city, and his mother and sisters lived on the place. Tuskegee had recommended me very highly for this job.

Upon arrival I found that this family already had another colored man working for them. Immediately my presence created such jealousy on his part that I had the double duty of winning his friendship and proving to the white people that I knew how to run the farm. It was not long, however, before our difficulties were all ironed out and we became good friends. I think that perhaps my first victory in winning my fellow worker was through my offer to teach him at night. He was wholly unlettered, and although much older than I, accepted my offer because, for one thing, he considered me indispensable in assisting him to write his love letters.

I found there were two or three milk cows on the place, but because of the lack of proper feed and care none of them was giving the maximum amount of milk. I

T. M. Campbell as a Student in School

T. M. Campbell When He Received His Appointment

took charge of the cows, doing the milking and feeding myself. Prior to this my associate had been doing the milking and I saw at a glance that in addition to his not knowing how to properly milk a cow, his methods were very unsanitary—dirty hands and unwashed udders. In the course of a week the people at the house were commenting upon the increase in the milk supply. Later there was not only plenty for the family use, but some to give to the neighbors. I was also given the task of feeding the mules, the hogs and the chickens. I was able to eliminate much waste of time and feed.

My first work in the field was an attempt to cut oats with an old-fashioned hand cradle. I did this one half-day and that night my hands were a mass of blisters. My back was stiff and sore. I reported to the lady of the house the next morning that it would take too long for two men to harvest the oats with the hand cradle.

"We have no other way to do it. What would you suggest?" she said. "I would suggest a mower," I replied. "But we have no mower," she said with some impatience. I asked her to purchase one but she said that there was not enough oats to warrant this expense. For a while it looked as if she had won out over my idea, but when I asked her to write her son for authorization to buy a mower, she agreed.

Immediately after he received the letter, the son came down to talk with me about the proposition. He presented a strong argument against buying the machine, saying that, in the first place, he did not have anybody to operate it. I told him that I could do it, and proposed that if he would buy one, I would put it

up, operate it and save enough hay on his farm to last the coming year. Further, I promised to cut hay for the neighbors at so much per day until the mower was paid for. I realized that I was taking on a rather heavy responsibility, but I was confident that it could be done, so the owner had me hitch up the team and drive to a near-by town where he bought a new mowing machine and rake. The proprietor of the hardware store from which the purchase was made was both surprised and skeptical when I told him that it would not be necessary for him to send his mechanic out to the plantation to set up the outfit.

On the following day, instead of using the old hand cradle, I sat proudly on the new mowing machine and cut the field of oats. In a week's time, with the aid of my assistant, we had mowed enough hay to last through the year. In the meantime the news went abroad that a "Tuskegee boy" on Mr. D——'s plantation was operating a mower and requests began pouring in from neighboring farmers for the outfit to come and cut their hay. To many of these requests we responded, and before the end of the season the mower and rake were paid for and a neat profit was made. After that incident, the young owner of the place wrote his mother to let me purchase anything that I needed with which to work.

Because that section of the country was somewhat rocky, there was available an abundance of stone. My next job, in addition to my regular routine, was to build a permanent lawn in front of the main entrance, including stone steps and a terraced front yard. Having had some experience in working in the stone quarry

in Georgia on my way to Tuskegee, I made use of this information. I took my helper and a team and hauled loads of manure from the lot and worked it into the lawn. From a near-by pasture we hauled loads of Bermuda sod and placed this on the yard. When the work was finished it completely changed the appearance of the residence. Upon his return home, the owner, seeing what had been done, decided, with his mother, that some improvements on the house were necessary. Many compliments came to me for this little service, both directly and through the family. I have now a set of gold cuff links which the owner gave me in appreciation of the manner in which I carried on in his absence.

When the time came for me to return to school the planter's mother sent for me and tried to persuade me to give up school, stating that I had more education than any Negro in that section. She further suggested that I marry some good girl, and offered to build a house for me, so that I might live with them and run the plantation. I declined, of course, on the grounds that I had worked too hard trying to get an education and had gone too far not to return to Tuskegee and finish. She finally agreed that it was the worthwhile thing to do, and gave me a little Bible as a memento of the splendid relationship that had developed between the family and me.*

While in that community, which was distinctly rural, I embraced the opportunity of allying myself with the Church and Sunday School. The first Sunday I went to church, I was asked to review the Sunday School

* See Appendix—Letter No. 3.

lesson, and each Sunday thereafter during the summer, I taught a regular class. Being a choir member at Tuskegee Institute, I also took a lead in the singing at the church. When the time came for me to leave the community, both white and colored friends expressed their sincere regrets at my going. Now, after twenty-nine years, when I go to that community, I am accorded a hearty welcome.

During the next summer, which was prior to my last year in school, I was recommended to accompany a party of United States geological surveyors, who worked in the Birmingham coal fields. I worked with the crew as its teamster. The chief of this service was a Northern man and his assistants were young college graduates from Washington and elsewhere. They were doing probation work. I was placed in charge of the camp. We moved from place to place throughout the district, remaining in one area not longer than two or three weeks. The work was not only pleasant but intensely interesting; as these surveyors, including the chief himself, took unusual interest in teaching me the practical side of geology. I learned how to select, pack, and ship samples of coal and other specimens of minerals to Washington. I also learned how to read topographical maps and to follow the various geological formations common to the section. When I was engaged for this work I was requested to bring with me a student who knew how to cook, so I was held virtually responsible for the preparation of the meals for the party. I had the duty of purchasing all of the food, and the care of the horses, repair of the buggies, harness and other camp equipment.

A few weeks after we had been in camp the chief notified me that in all probability his wife would come from Washington to spend some time with him, and he wanted me to set up a comfortable house tent for her, and administer to her comforts while on her visit. He stated that she was convalescing from a recent illness, and would need special care while he was in the field. This the cook and I did to the satisfaction of both the chief and his wife.

On one occasion we pitched our camp in a mountain community in which there were no Negroes. So the only Negroes there were the cook and myself. After locating our camp site and pitching our tents I went to a near-by residence and asked the lady if we might get drinking water from her well for a week or two. She consented, but I noticed that she looked at me rather strangely. The next morning when I returned for water she came out, said, "Good morning," and asked if I would be kind enough to wait a moment. Returning, she said, "I hope you will not be offended, but my little girl has never seen a colored person, and last night I told her that there was one here. She asked me to show you to her. I told her that I would, so I would like for her to look at you." My suspicions immediately disappeared, and I gladly submitted to the inspection by the child, who gazed upon me in a more or less awe-stricken manner, while her mother explained that this was a colored man. The little girl and I became good friends, but I remained a curiosity to her.

My strenuous work at Tuskegee in my efforts to make my board and other school expenses had made fearful inroads upon my health, but during this sum-

mer in camp I had ample means of getting much needed rest in addition to the very best food that could be obtained. From the first of June until early October I did not sleep in a bed, but out in an open tent on a cot. I returned to school greatly improved in health, and was able to put in a good, hard year's work.

The manner in which I cared for the government-owned horses, four in number, impressed the authorities to the extent that I was asked to bring the animals to Tuskegee with me, and keep them, at government expense, during my last year in school. I rode them approximately one hundred and sixty miles in two and one-half days, resting at night and changing from one to another every half day. The following summer after my graduation, the chief of the survey insisted that I return to the camp, and work again with him. This I was glad to do since I had as yet no permanent work.* I took the horses back to the camp in the same manner in which I had brought them to Tuskegee the previous fall.

At the close of the second's summer's work I returned to the Institute to pursue graduate work. I had just begun my advanced study when Dr. Washington recommended me to the Federal Government to be the first to hold the position of Negro Extension Agent.**

* See Appendix—Letter No. 4.

** See Appendix—Letters No. 5 and 6.

PART II

THE SCHOOL ON WHEELS

The Rural Negro Youth and the Home in Which He Lives Still Constitutes a Serious Problem

One of the Few Old Settlers Who Remembers When Booker T. Washington Came to Macon County and Began Teaching the Children of Ex-Slaves How to Work with Their Hands

CHAPTER ONE

A Champion of the Negro Farmer

ALTHOUGH MUCH HAS BEEN WRITTEN about Booker T. Washington and his achievements as an educator, philosopher and leader of his race, I feel that far too little has been said of him as progenitor of the Movable School. Reasons for the need of such an agency to visit the Negro farmer have existed since the day of the Emancipation Proclamation. Picture if you can the plight of countless unschooled slaves, suddenly thrown on their own resources in their attempts to obtain food, shelter and clothing for their families. This appalling and pathetic situation prompted in Dr. Washington the desire to help these rural people and led to the inception in his mind of the Movable School idea. The plan has long since proved its worth and has passed far beyond the experimental stage.

In addition to visits to the North to secure funds for erecting buildings and maintaining the Institute, Mr. Washington's trails, in a road cart drawn by an old mare, led to the rural homes and churches near Tuskegee. He encouraged his teachers to do likewise. The effectiveness of his program and their appreciation of it are interestingly brought out in narratives told by a few settlers still living who knew and loved "Mr. Washington," as he was affectionately called by the colored people, or "Booker T." as he was referred to by the white people.

His first objective was the securing of students. This was a difficult task, for these poverty stricken people did not have money with which to send their children to school. Booker Washington urged them to come without money. These students supplied an abundance of labor that was needed in the building of the institution, and were given steady employment under instructors in the cutting of timber, sawing of lumber and brickmaking, as well as in the production of large quantities of food and feed stuffs consumed by the school.

Dr. Washington's second objective in going into the homes of the rural people was to get first hand information as to their needs in order that these needs could be taken into consideration in the planning of courses of study beneficial not alone to the students but to the families and communities from whence they came. He seldom lost an opportunity to appeal to the people to make the best of every opportunity to improve their farm and home life. He was able to use information gained through his visitation in interesting friends in the North to assist in financing his ideas of education, which provided that poor Negro boys and girls, particularly of the rural South, might have access to such training, in addition to strictly academic courses, as would enable them to become assets to their communities.

But how was he to succeed if such woeful rural conditions were allowed to exist right at the school's door? Not only near the school, but throughout the Black Belt in Alabama and other Southern States could be seen hundreds of squalid, ramshackled cabins, tenanted

by forlorn, emaciated, poverty stricken Negroes who year after year struggled in cotton fields and disease-laden swamps, trying to eke out a miserable existence. When day was done, they came home to rest in the crude one- or two-room log cabins or houses of rough pine slabs. Often the families numbered more than a dozen persons, ranging from infants in arms to the old and decrepit. In these shacks they ate, slept and lived, if such could be called living. In many of these shacks there were as few as one or two beds. Pig pens were often at the very doors. Wells from which they obtained water were in many instances down the hill from these pens, or close by them. Windows, windowpanes and screens were practically unknown. Steps were a thing of danger upon which to tread. Here and there, chimneys were partly fallen down; others were propped against the houses by long poles. In countless cases there were no toilets whatsoever, and where there were, they were often just a few boards nailed crudely together with a piece of sack serving as a door.

Dr. Washington began his work of bettering conditions by holding monthly group meetings at the "Normal School," as the institution was then called. He invited the farmers and workers in other lines to come and talk over their problems. He arranged displays of simple but attractive exhibits of produce from the Institute farm, which was located on land of the same grade as that occupied by the farmers. Effort was made to show these untrained people that they could raise more produce on smaller acreage at less expense and make their homes more attractive and sanitary. Most

of all, Dr. Washington sought to imbue them with the idea of educating their children.

Dr. George W. Carver, who had just completed his graduate work in agriculture at Iowa State College, was induced by Dr. Washington to come to Tuskegee in 1896, to fill the need for an instructor of practical farming on a higher level. In those early years it was Dr. Carver's custom, in addition to his regular work, to put a few tools and demonstration exhibits in a buggy and set out, in the manner of Dr. Washington, on Saturday afternoons, to visit rural areas near Tuskegee. There, during week-ends, he would give practical demonstrations, both varied and seasonal. Dr. Carver laid much stress on Sunday demonstrations. The church was, and still is, the biggest influence in the life of the rural Negro. On Sundays it was always possible to find them in numbers at their respective places of worship.

Dr. Washington realized other needs in this educating of the farmers, and as a result organized a Department of Agriculture for training young men to go out and assist farmers in improving their methods of operation. He was successful in inducing the Alabama State Legislature of 1896 to pass a law creating the Tuskegee Agricultural Experiment Station. The act provided that the station was to be "maintained for educating and training colored students in scientific agriculture." Dr. Carver was made director of this station, and a stage coach or "carry-all" was provided, whereby lecturers could travel over the county on week-ends and assist the farm folk.

Let us now consider the first annual Negro Farmers Conference,* which was held in February, 1892, and out

of which grew the present agricultural extension work among Negroes.

To Dr. Washington's surprise this first conference brought five hundred farm people to Tuskegee Institute. To this gathering many came afoot. Great numbers, in order to be on time for the opening session, left home as early as midnight prior to the meeting, in various types of vehicles and conveyances, including wagons drawn by oxen. At this and at subsequent conferences, Dr. Washington always conducted the program and discussions in such an informal and simple manner that the farmers were assured of their welcome to the school and readily made to feel that they were an integral part of the meetings. Usually someone was called upon to lead an old time plantation melody. Soon all present joined in, humming, nodding, and softly patting their feet. Many times when the climax of a spiritual was reached, the atmosphere was surcharged with that oneness of spirit which so completely characterizes the Negro rural church gathering. The constraints of fear and self-consciousness were swept away, and kindred souls felt only the stir of emotion which served to open their hearts and minds to the inspiration that was to follow. Dr. Washington, in his tactful way of approaching the most delicate subjects, would launch into his program, calling the attention of the people to the vital facts affecting their lives, without offending or embarrassing them.

At the fourth annual meeting, Dr. Washington definitely outlined the purpose of the conference, in his statement that "The aim will be, as in the three previous years, to bring together for a quiet conference, not the

politicians, but the representatives of the common, hard working farmers and mechanics—the bone and sinew of the Negro race, and its ministers and teachers. Two objectives will be kept in view. First, to find out from the people, themselves, the facts as to their conditions and to get their ideas as to the remedies for the present evils. Second, to get information as to how the young men and women now being educated can best use their education in helping the masses." This conference was the forerunner of the many modern farm congresses held at numerous agricultural colleges for both white and colored people in various parts of the country.

Dr. Washington further stated: "It is believed that such a meeting of workers for the elevation of the Negro, held in the Black Belt, with lessons and impressions of the direct contact with the masses of the colored people fresh before them, can only result in much practical good to the cause of Negro education." In emphasizing the object of these conferences, he urged that the problems be confined primarily to conditions within their reach. "We might discuss many wrongs which should be righted," he would say. "But it seems to me that it is best to lay hold of the things that can be put aright, rather than those with which we can do nothing but find fault. Be frank with each other; state things as they are; do not say anything for mere sound, or because you think it will please or displease another. Let us hear the truth on all matters."

The general conference adopted a simple set of rules:

1. To abolish and do away with the mortgage system just as rapidly as possible.

2. To raise our food supplies, such as corn, potatoes, syrup, peas, hogs, chickens, etc., at home rather than go in debt for them at the stores.

3. To stop throwing away our time and money on Saturdays by standing around town, drinking, and disgracing ourselves in many other ways.

4. To oppose at all times the excursions and the camp meetings, and to try earnestly to secure better schools, better churches, better teachers and better preachers.

5. To try to buy homes, to urge upon all Negroes the necessity of owning homes and farms, and not only to own them, but try to beautify and improve them.

These conferences also adopted resolutions in which special references were made to women, such as the following:

1. We realize that our homes are not always what they should be. We believe that much of the immorality which now exists can be traced to the one-room cabin. We urge upon every woman to insist upon the securing of more than one room.

2. It is true that the death rate of the race, especially of little children, is on the increase. This is largely due to the lack of proper conditions of home life. There is a lack of cleanliness, pure air, proper clothing and proper food. We urge that every woman keep her home clean, well aired, and her children well fed and clothed.

3. We know that women, by their efforts, largely support the ministers and teachers. We urge upon

every woman to see to it that only strictly moral men and women occupy their pulpits and teach their children.

4. We believe that it depends upon the women as to whether or not they receive the respect of men, especially our men. Some women are too careless as to the loud manner in which they act on the streets and in other public places, such as churches, railway stations, and the like. Some are unduly familiar with men. We urge each woman to see to it that in the streets and in other public places she speaks in a quiet tone of voice, that she refrains from spitting on the street, and that she does not at any time act familiarly with men.

5. We believe that there is still room for improvement among some of our women as to the manner of their dress. We urge that neat calico or gingham dresses of modest color take the place of the coarse homespun ones; that the dark colored sailor hat take the place of the red bandanna; that women always wear neat looking shoes, and that they never wear their hair wrapped in strings.

6. During certain months of the year there is little or no work for women. We urge upon every woman the raising of poultry and consequently, the production of eggs, the making of butter, the picking, drying and canning of fruits, such as berries, plums, peaches, and apples, the cultivating of a garden and raising of bees. Let her sell her produce to the best advantage, reserving a portion for home use. Let the woman grasp every opportunity to help her husband, in order that the purchase of a home may be made possible.

Of all the important events that crowded Mr. Washington's calendar as the years passed, none received more consideration, none was more important to him than the annual home-coming of the Negro farmers to Tuskegee. There was no group of people in the whole country whose cause lay nearer his heart than that of the Negro farmers.

His influence over them was heightened by his patience in hearing their problems as well as offering possible solutions. He listened attentively to stories of their failures, their disappointments and besetments, and helped them to meet their difficulties by counter questioning and pointing out the more favorable examples of others among them.

Dr. Washington never gave up his visits to the homes of the rural people. This was his custom from the very beginning of the school. Negro farmers of Macon County annually looked forward to his coming to their communities and speaking to them. These tours were almost always made on Sundays. The last time he went on a rural trip, which was in 1914, he insisted that the houses along the roads traveled by the "Washington Party" be whitewashed, the yards cleaned, and fences repaired in advance of their coming. He also urged that the farmers grow their own foodstuffs and have some produce on exhibition along the roadside in front of their houses. In his speeches he always admonished his hearers to "quit living out of tin cans and paper bags." He said that Negro farmers must stop getting someone to "run them" every year. He urged them to form the habit of taking something to town to sell, since most of them went to town with empty

wagons and came back with them loaded. He advised that by reversing this order for a few years, they would be able to buy small tracts of land, and, after careful planning and hard work, they could build nice comfortable homes and begin saving towards sending their children to school.

On one occasion Dr. Washington went to a grocery store in the town of Tuskegee and borrowed some cans of blackberries, peaches, tomatoes and syrup, which he took with him on one of his Sunday tours. In addressing his audience, he held up some of the cans and said that the storekeepers told him that they did a good business among Negro farmers in Macon County in the sales of canned foodstuffs and fruits at a time when they could have been easily raised in the gardens or gathered in the near-by woods.

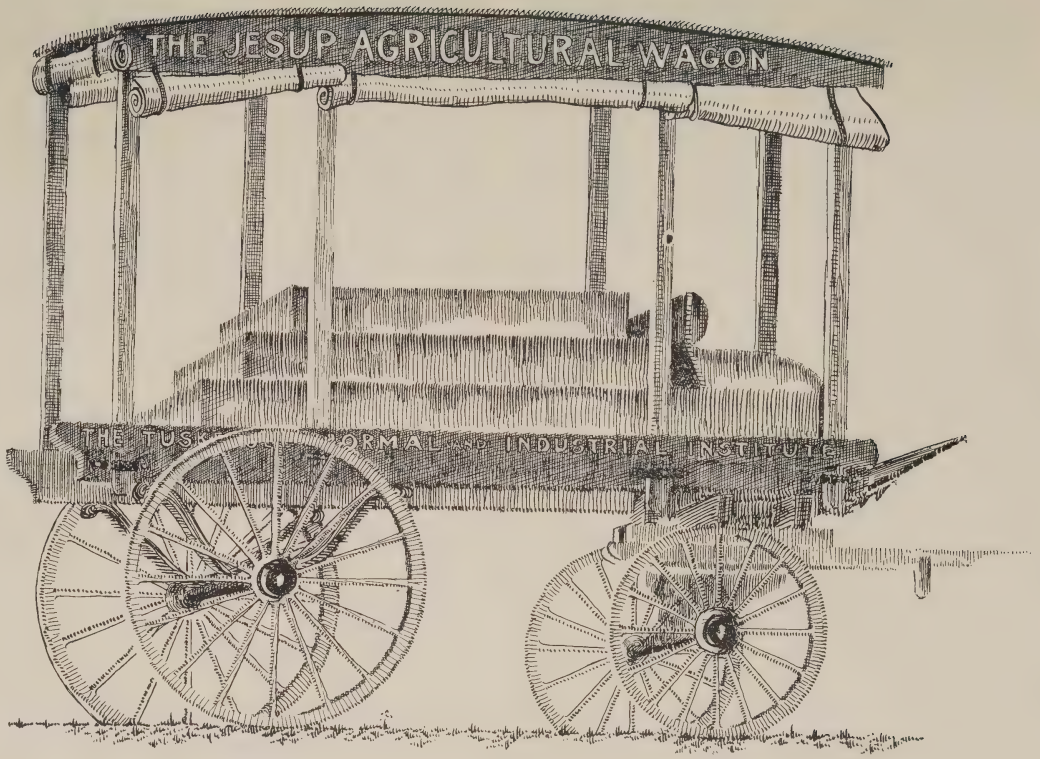
The following is a copy of a letter written me less than a month before his death, which evidences Dr. Washington's compelling interest in the improvement of the farmsteads of the county:

Tuskegee Institute, Ala.
October 19, 1915.

Mr. T. M. Campbell:

In so far as it will not interfere with any of your other duties, I very much wish that as you go through Macon County you might encourage the people to whitewash or paint their houses; also be very sure that they are encouraged to keep their yards and farm fences in good repair. I have in mind especially the matter of painting and whitewashing.

(Signed) Booker T. Washington,
Principal.



Dr. Carvers's Sketch of the Original Jesup Wagon

A Before and After Demonstration in Home Sanitation for the Family Unit

His continued effort to aid the rural Negro has had telling effect in numerous cases. A concrete example is furnished in the following story told to me by a Negro farmer of Bullock County, who was in the audience when Dr. Washington was on one of his rural campaigns:

"In January, 1912, Dr. Washington spoke to a large group of farmers at Fort Davis, Alabama, on cutting out the mortgage system. He asked the farmers how many of them carried mortgages. With few exceptions, all held up their hands. He said, 'If I give you some advice as to just how to eliminate this kind of thing, will you take it?' We all agreed that we would and he gave us helpful information which we promised to follow. When I went home I tried to do the first thing that he had suggested; that was to make preparation for a year round garden. To do this I laid out a garden and planted it according to his advice. I built a hen house, made some coops, and my wife began to raise chickens and was soon able to sell some. We had at that time four milk cows that were not giving enough milk for table use. After I built a pasture and began feeding my cows I sold from five to six dollars worth of butter each week. In the meantime, I found some old tools and put them in repair, so I didn't have to buy any new ones for making the crop that year. At nights I sold blackberries picked in the day by my children, who were too small to work in the field. We sold vegetables from our garden during the early summer.

"These sidelines gave me a cash income so that I did not have to borrow from merchants or the banks. In the month of August, I sold $70.00 worth of watermel-

ons and by keeping busy planting something all the time, as I had been instructed, I made a larger crop that year than ever before. I was paying only one and a half bales of cotton for rent, and yet this was the first time in all my life that I didn't owe anyone at the end of the year; and I haven't had a 'ration day' since. Finally, the war came on and cotton went to thirty-five cents a pound and peas to five dollars a bushel. That year I deposited nine hundred dollars and set aside four hundred dollars extra to run my crop the next year. When the war ended, I had saved $3,468. I constantly kept Dr. Washington's speech before me as a guide. In 1919, I bought 158 acres of land from a white banker and paid $2,450 cash for it. The next year, I spent $450 in repairs on my home. I also spent $140.00 in ditching the farm. Since that time, I have not been without a bank account. At present my property is valued at $7,810.00."

Living today all over the South are many Negroes who attribute their success to the inspiration gained from listening to Booker T. Washington's strong pleas: "live at home; take a load of produce to town to exchange for those items that you cannot raise; keep a year round garden, a pig, a cow and raise some fruit; start a bank account; put aside a little money each year until you get enough to buy a piece of land, even if it is but one acre."

Long before I entered school, and throughout my student days, Tuskegee's influence was spreading far into the rural districts. Dr. Washington realized the need of a more definite means of reaching the masses—especially those who did not come to the Farmers' Con-

ferences, many of whom remained away from the meetings because of self-consciousness and the imaginary discomforts they experienced in being obliged to mingle with "educated people." So eager was he to extend helpful information and inspiration throughout this and adjacent counties that he conceived the idea of itinerant demonstrators, or the "Movable School of Agriculture." He appointed a committee, headed by Dr. George W. Carver, to draw up definite plans for a demonstration wagon, including the kind of equipment it should carry to the very door of the Negro farmer who did not or could not attend an agricultural school.

With these plans, Dr. Washington was able to interest a friend, the late Morris K. Jesup of New York, in the project. Mr. Jesup made a donation with which to purchase and equip a vehicle to carry exhibits and demonstrations to the homes of Negro farmers. "The Jesup Agricultural Wagon," the first "Movable School," was fitted up and set in operation in June, 1906.

CHAPTER TWO

Growth and Expansion

THE FOLLOWING EXTRACT is taken from a news item published November 17, 1906 in the "Tuskegee Student," the official organ of the Institute at that time. "The Jesup Agricultural Wagon for better farming started from the grounds of the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute on its mission of usefulness May 24, 1906, under the guidance of George R. Bridgeforth of the Agricultural Department.

After the wagon had been operated three months under Mr. Bridgeforth, and the success of this type of work seemed assured, the idea was presented by Dr. Washington to the Federal Government, and accepted. The wagon became the vehicle of the first Negro demonstration agent in federal employ and was driven on a regular schedule to the surrounding communities where Negro farmers were instructed in better methods of living and farming.

It was on November 12, 1906, shortly after my graduation from Tuskegee, that Dr. Washington asked me to begin a new and rather peculiar type of work, then known as the "Farmers' Cooperative Demonstration," in Macon County. This was in connection with a kind of work which he had already begun, under the name of the "Movable School of Agriculture." The idea behind both was to teach farmers better methods of farming and home life. In requesting me to undertake the

The Jesup Agricultural Wagon on a Field Trip in Macon County, Alabama

The Knapp Agricultural Truck, Named in Honor of the Late Dr. Seaman A. Knapp

new program, Dr. Washington said: "The reason I am anxious for you to begin the work is that the farmers who need instruction most, I fear, are not getting it. We must, in a larger measure, take the information to them." He also insisted that we make use of the actual demonstrations rather than speech making only. "Instead of telling the farmer what to do, show him how to do and he will never forget it."

I shall long remember the day when I received a government commission designating me agricultural collaborator for the United States Department of Agriculture. No less will I also remember the check I received after my first month's work.

The total cost of the Jesup Wagon and its equipment was $674.50. The items were two mules, $355.00; harness, $40.00; wagon, $190.50; cream separator, $75.00; two crates, $5.00; churn, $5.00; cultivator, $4.00. My salary as agent amounted to $840.00 annually and was paid by Tuskegee Institute and the General Education Board. To this the Federal Government added its yearly allowance of $10.00. My salary of $841.00 added to the cost of the wagon made a total of $1515.00 invested in the project for the first year. In addition to this, maintenance expense was provided.

The "Agricultural Wagon," rather large and finely equipped, was sufficient to attract the attention of the country folk. Dr. Washington characterized it as "A Farmers' College on Wheels." While the wagon was educating the father in the field, the Institute was teaching his children.

In addition to purchased equipment, other needed items were loaned by the Institute. The wagon was

fitted up with improved implements such as might be used on up-to-date farms of this section. It carried a cream separator, a milk tester, a revolving hand churn, a two-horse steel-beam plow, a one-horse steel-beam plow, a diverse cultivator, a spike toothed harrow, a middle burster, a set of garden tools. It represented the best, and was always well kept. It was intended that every part of this equipment should be so simple that even the least educated and the youngest could understand it and profit by its use.

On my initial trip with the Jesup Agricultural Wagon, I found that some of its equipment was greatly out of proportion to the agricultural status of the people. I was very seldom able to use the cream separator, the churn, or the Babcock testing outfit because so very few people had cows. On one occasion, following a program during which I announced a dairy demonstration, I had to ask the family at whose house it was to be given, to refrain from milking the cows that night so as to provide enough milk for demonstrating the operation of the separator the following morning.

My first experiences convinced me that, to be of the greatest help, I had to reduce all my illustrations and demonstrations to very common and practical terms. So the milk outfit was removed from the wagon and in its stead was placed a large crate accommodating a cow of a standard breed, which was offered as an example for farmers to improve their herds. The people were always interested in the demonstration when we used the crate to carry a "razor back" type of hog in one end and a pure bred pig in the other, with placards attached giving their respective ages and weights. In-

variably farmers would inquire where animals of the purebred type could be purchased and this led to the improvement of many herds.

The equipment of the Jesup Wagon varied according to the season of the year. Just before garden planting time the vehicle was equipped with a portable garden with growing vegetables thereon, and driven to the meeting places. Concrete illustrations were given on how to prepare the land, how to fertilize it, and how to plant the garden. During the plowing season field demonstrations were given in the use of more horsepower and better machinery. It was very convenient to take the team from the wagon, hitch it to the better type plow and give actual demonstrations in the preparation of the soil and in the cultivation of the crops during the growing season.

One day I loaned a farmer a walking cultivator in order to prove to him that with such a cultivator one man and a mule could cover twice as much ground as he could with his "scooter stock."* The next day when I called for the plow, the farmer begged me to let him keep it another day; to this I consented. Realizing that he must give up the plow and convinced that he had cultivated his cotton with far more ease and in less time than by the old method, he immediately went to a store and bought a cultivator like the one I carried on the wagon. A neighbor of this farmer saw the work and within a few days he too went to town and bought, not one, but two cultivators. To my inquiry as to why he bought two cultivators he said: "Well, I saw

* A small single plow.

Brother Jones using one the other day and it worked so fine I thought I would buy two as my farm is larger than his. Then too, I never like to let anybody get ahead of me."

I was not only able to use the Jesup Wagon in the week days for carrying on farm and home demonstrations, but found that it came in handy in transporting speakers from Tuskegee Institute to the near-by churches on Sundays. And here, I should like to make this observation, that no worker among rural people can reach the fullest degree of his usefulness who does not spend a great deal of time with the rural people in their churches on Sundays. They are just as much in need of leadership there as anywhere else.

It was shortly after I began demonstration work that I realized that from a standpoint of community leadership, the rural Negro minister was a real power and that there was no denying the influence and effect of his personality upon the community as well as upon his immediate flock. It is really a great pity that one of the most vital problems among rural people, their religious life, is left so largely in the hands of those who are ignorant and poorly prepared for this great responsibility.

My experience has convinced me that much organized effort should be spent in order that the rural pastor may become more enlightened on community problems and home and farm life. Many a community whose economic standards are unbelievably low keep the most ignorant type of preacher in fairly good circumstances, furnishing him with money and the necessities of life. The development of the mind and spirit of the rural Negro preacher is of great concern today. He is in posi-

tion to help, if he will, encourage and foster to a greater extent, every civic and community organization at work for the good of the Negro farmer.

I sometimes feel that theological schools which prepare Negro ministers for service in the rural districts should include in their curricula courses in agriculture and medicine. For obvious reasons the qualified Negro physician will not venture far from urban centers in the South and unfortunately funds are inadequate to employ enough extension agents to supplement their work effectively. If the present army of rural pastors were able to minister to some extent to the sick and to supply economic guidance in addition to ministering to the spiritual life of their members, they would go a long way toward elevating country life to a satisfactory level.

Once while driving the Jesup Agricultural Wagon I came to a community where the usual summer revival, sometimes referred to as a "protracted meeting," was in session at the local church. Upon learning that many of the people had gathered there, I sought to take advantage of the gathering by driving my wagon to the church grove. I unhitched my team, arranged my equipment in exhibit fashion and sent an associate into the church to ask the preacher to announce that when the service was concluded, I would be on the outside and would like to give a demonstration and make some remarks. The people came out in large numbers and, out of curiosity, looked at the large wagon and its driver, but did not remain for my demonstration. My associate informed me, to my surprise, that before he could get a chance to speak, the preacher asked his congrega-

tion to rise, and just before the benediction was pronounced said: "I see the Tuskegee farm wagon has just drove up on the outside, and I don't know what they plan to do, but I just lak to say to the members of this church that we can't afford to engage in worldly affairs while we are busy engaged in saving souls, and I advise you not to take up any time with the wagon." He also cautioned the people to "watch those silver tongued speakers and the man with a pencil behind his ear."

Facing these conditions, it required much time and patience to get the work established. But we continued our efforts and as time went on, we were able to observe improvements in both attitudes and results. The following extract from a letter* written fifteen years after the beginning of the Movable School, to County Agent M. B. Ivey, of Union Springs, Alabama, by Rev. L. W. Owens, an educated rural minister, is a splendid contrast to the experience just related: "I wondered what could really happen at 8:00 o'clock in the morning with grown-ups. On reaching the house, I found myself completely upset in my imagination and wholly out of harmony with the work. Everybody was in work clothes and too busy to see me. The class in terracing was in a near-by field where the farmers were being given lessons in the use of the tripod and target in running terraces. Another class was standing around a large barrel where they were learning how to make and apply whitewash and how to mix stains. Other classes were being taught rug-making, the candling of eggs, dyeing,

* Letter printed in full in the Appendix.

care of the sick room, building poultry houses and sanitary toilets, soap making, lawn building. Everything possible was being taught that makes rural life a life of happiness and contentment. Of course, this was my first day's experience in a Movable School.

"The second day I was there on time with my old discarded hand saw and suit of overalls which fitted me for the occasion. Along with eighteen other farmers I soon learned to sharpen and set my saw. We were given lessons in the use of the square and the cutting of rafters, then on to the cutting out and building of poultry houses which gave us all a chance to try our saws in cutting to the line, which everyone enjoyed."

During my first year in the work, I once drove the Jesup Wagon to the Warrior Stand community, about twelve miles from Tuskegee Institute. Because of wagon transportation and bad roads, this was considered a long way from headquarters, so I decided to spend the night at the home of a farmer. After I had fed my team, I went into the house, which I found to be unusually well ordered. I was called to supper shortly afterwards and enjoyed a well-cooked and nicely served meal. Following this, the whole family, father, mother and two boys, joined me in my bedroom, which was also used as a sitting room. We became better acquainted. They wanted to know something about me and my work, and I was equally anxious to learn all I could about them, and through them, as much as I could about the community, white and colored. I was not disappointed, for they told me much of the history of that section. We pleasantly passed the long evening by singing songs and telling stories. I had become something of a hero to the

whole family, especially to the two boys, who did not want to go to bed.

The next morning when I arose to dress, I had to go on the back porch to "wash up." I took from a small bag, my tooth brush and a small cake of tooth soap and began cleaning my teeth. This procedure interested these boys very much; so much so that one looked at the other and giggled. Turning to him I asked, "Why are you laughing?"

"Nothin' much," he replied.

Further pressing him for an answer, he asked me what I was washing my mouth with. I replied that it was soap. To this he replied, "I never see'd nobody wash they mouth wid soap before." I told him that I was using a specially prepared soap. For the time being, he said no more.

After breakfast I took up some farm matters with the father, hitched up my team, said good-bye and drove off. But before I had gone very far, I heard someone whistle. I stopped, looked back and saw one of the boys running toward the wagon.

"When is you coming back here agin?", he asked.

"I don't know. Why?" I asked.

"Well, what do one of dem tooth brushes lak you had dis mornin' cost?"

"Only twenty-five cents," I answered.

"What do one of dem boxes of soap cost?"

I informed him that the soap, too, cost twenty-five cents.

"When you come out here agin' bring me and Bud one a piece, please," he said and returned to the house.

It might not have been considered the proper thing to do, but I changed my itinerary, and the next day found me on my way back to the home of this farmer. In a little bag were two tooth brushes and two boxes of tooth soap, which I delivered without charge to those two ambitious boys. As I look back over the years in which I have been trying to teach by example, I have come to consider this one of the most valuable pieces of demonstration work I ever performed.

In the early days it was Booker Washington's custom to require his teachers to bring classes into the Farmers' Conferences for observation. As a student in one of these classes attending a conference, I heard the following dialogue between Dr. Washington and a rural Negro delegate:

Dr. Washington: "I see a brother standing there in the back of the Chapel who seems anxious to say something. Won't you please tell us your name and from what county you come?"

The delegate: "Sir?"

Dr. Washington: "Tell us your name!"

The delegate: "Oh! My name is Duke, Joe Duke and I'm from Limestone County. I want to tell the body why we as a race don't git along no better than we does."

Dr. Washington: "Now that's a mighty broad subject, but before you start, suppose you tell these farmers here from all over the South how much land you own, and how you paid for it."

The delegate: "Who me?"

Dr. Washington: "Yes, you."

The delegate: "Oh, I ain't got none yit."

Dr. Washington: "Well, that's too bad. I want to advise you to go back home and bargain for a piece of land, if it isn't but one acre. But since you are standing, suppose you tell us how the morals are in your community."

The delegate: "We ain't got none of them."

Dr. Washington: "You don't understand me. I mean what are the greatest evils in your community."

The delegate: "Oh, I see. Well, the greatest evils we got is gamblin,' stealin' and totin' 'cealed weep'ns."

The more intelligent of the audience roared with laughter. After Dr. Washington had used his gavel vigorously to restore order, the conference went on with more reports from the farmers of their failures and successes.

I confess that at the time I did not realize as a student, the full significance of the whole proceedings, but a few years later, after I had finished school and had been appointed United States Demonstration Agent under the Department of Agriculture and had begun working on the farms and in the homes of these simple people, the whole tragedy of the rural situation among Negroes in the South began to reveal itself to me.

The nature of my work as demonstration agent and operator of the Movable School necessitated my living intimately, eating, sleeping and mingling with all kinds and classes of people. I had the experience of sleeping one night and eating two meals in the room with a man who had been confined to bed for a long time with tuberculosis. Of course, I did not know this until after I had partaken of the hospitality of the farmer.

At another place I spent a night in the home of a farmer who had only two rooms and five in the family. I noticed that there were only two beds in the house. When informed that my bed was ready, I retired. Being tired from the day's journey, I soon fell asleep. Awakening in the middle of the night, I found that the three children had been smuggled into bed with me. In many places after a hard day's work, I went to bed only to be disturbed in the night by countless bedbugs. Occasionally, they were so numerous that by morning the pillows and clothing were smeared with blood.

On another occasion I was invited by a white planter to bring the Movable School to his plantation and give some demonstrations. He assumed the responsibility for my entertainment and assigned me to stop with his leading tenant, his overseer, who lived in what he called the best house occupied by Negroes. There were but two rooms and the boys and girls slept in the kitchen while I slept in the same room with the man and his wife. To avoid embarrassment in retiring, they left the room until I went to bed and arose in the morning before I did. At another place, I mentioned to the woman of the house that I wanted to bathe the next morning. Early in the morning someone tapped on my window and stated that my bath was ready. I opened the window, looked on the shelf and saw a small tin washpan containing about a quart of water. By its side was a vile smelling bar of soap and a small piece of flour sack, which were to constitute the entire facilities for my bath.

While doing Movable School work in that same community, I was directed to one who was reputed to be the leading Negro farmer of the county. He had been very

successful in buying land and had recently completed and moved into a five-room cottage. The old house, which had not been torn down, made a striking contrast of "before and after," when compared with the new home.

As it was in the fall of the year, the children were picking cotton in the field near-by. I went out to talk with them. Approaching what appeared to be a rather old man, I found him, on closer inspection, to be a young fellow of fewer than twenty-five years. He was the unmarried brother of the owner of the place who, having contracted tuberculosis, had been given up by the doctor as incurable. He was unable to work but elected to be out in the warm sun and open air. I became interested in his case and talked with the owner's wife. He was her husband's brother. I asked her where he slept. She showed me into a small room about nine by twelve feet with two windows. From the fact that the windows were shut—it was in the late afternoon—and appeared not to have been opened that day, I surmised that no fresh air had been let into the room during the day. She pointed to one of the two beds in the room, which had not been made up, as his bed. On the floor by the bedside was a pile of sand into which this young man expectorated. The sand had not been changed during the day and was covered with flies.

Upon my asking her who had used the other bed, she replied that her two youngest sons slept there. When I asked her where the sick man ate his meals, she told me that he ate at the family table and drank water from the same dipper as the rest of the household. After getting this startling information, I asked her if she were

not afraid of endangering the health of the whole family and in a most pathetic tone of voice she said, "Yes, I guess so, but you know he is my husband's brother and I don't 'wanna' cause no hard feelin's."

In this particular place I neither spent the night nor ate a meal for the simple reason that I was afraid of the conditions there.

At most places where I stopped, the farmers lived in unscreened houses. Many, many times I was forced to eat food over which flies had crawled and these flies had equally free access to open privies, near-by barns, and pig pens. In most cases I either had to drink water from polluted surface streams or shallow wells that were little more than cess-pools, or drink none at all. It is true that with much more effort and inconvenience, I could have found better homes here and there in some communities, but my aim was to reach "the man farthest down."

I have drawn this rather sordid picture in order that the reader may realize more fully the conditions with which I was forced to contend, if close contacts were to be maintained and good results obtained. I now understand what Booker T. Washington meant when he asked, "How are the morals in your community?" The full significance of the farmer's reply: "Gamblin', stealin,' totin' 'cealed weep'ns," has likewise been revealed to me.

I finally came to the conclusion that in order to effect changes in any appreciable degree, it would be necessary for me to eat, sleep and converse with the "gambler" and not gamble; fraternize with the "thief" and not steal, and walk unarmed with those who were

dangerously and ignorantly " 'totin' 'cealed weep'ns"; at all times, striving to gain their confidence and friendship. I soon found out that it was necessary, in addition to the program laid out by the government, to show these "unmoral" people by example and demonstration, how to live better.

The success and continued growth of the early Movable School movement in Macon County was very gratifying. In 1914, after the passage of the Smith-Lever Act, which apportioned rural extension work through the Land Grant Colleges, the Alabama Polytechnic Institute at Auburn assumed responsibility for all extension work in agriculture and home economics in the State of Alabama. With an increased appropriation, the work among Negroes was expanded. Instead of one man working alone with the outfit, a woman, a home demonstration agent, was added. News of the Movable School from Tuskegee spread into adjacent counties and invitations from white and colored people began filtering in so very rapidly that it became necessary to extend its activities. A serious difficulty, however, was the question of transportation over the bad roads. Because of the distances, it was found impractical to drive the mule team into other counties. To comply with requests for visits to more distant communities, a system was adopted whereby the agents traveled by train from headquarters to the nearest railroad station. The equipment was placed in trunks and checked as baggage. Farmers would drive us from the stations to the different communities. Our equipment on these itineraries consisted of stereoptican machines, lantern slides, lecture charts, terracing outfits, fireless cookers and canning

outfits. The plans for conducting these schools were very definite and usually were followed out to the letter. The following is a type of letter written preceding our work in a community, to the rural school supervisors and white landowners:

"I would like to call your attention to the plans we would like for you to begin outlining: viz, board and lodging for at least four persons and a good central meeting place. I might suggest here that in some places we use the county courthouse. Whatever building we use, we would like to get the farmers to bring enough products to keep a standing exhibit during the whole three days. We need a two-mule team and plow for field demonstration, and a cultivator of some kind. We shall need a convenient field for plowing, a garden near-by in which to do some planting, a near-by home to which the women may go and do some housework and laundering. I would suggest that you appoint a committee to look after this. Invite both white and colored to come, and provide enough fuel to keep the building warm during the three days. Invite all the preachers in your vicinity. Pick out some good singers to lead plantation melodies and let me insist upon your having the farmers bring in large amounts of farm products so that the building may be elaborately decorated."

We insistently adhered to the system of assembling the people in school houses or churches. This was the natural thing to do, as in rural districts all religious and civic meetings of importance are held in one or the other of these places. Only very rarely did we depart from this custom and conduct the school in the county courthouse. In almost every case, we had in some way

to offset an uncomfortable feeling among the people toward meeting in the courthouse, as it too often recalled to their minds the trials of their friends and sometimes punishment meted out to them by the courts. The officials of counties where such meetings were held often wrote strong letters expressing the favorable impressions the School made upon them.*

At first we used only railroad transportation to supplement the Jesup Agricultural Wagon in our travels to the more distant parts of the state. The demand for wider service and the new developments in the field of motor transportation made the Jesup Wagon less and less practical for use as the vehicle of the Movable School. No funds were available for purchasing a truck to replace the wagon, so the use of railway transportation as our chief mode of travel in making our itineraries continued. We often encountered difficulty in hiring teams to transport us from the stations into the more backward communities where the Negroes, who most needed our aid, lived. Much of the teaching was done by means of charts, lantern slides, and illustrated lectures, while exhibits of farm products and household articles were employed to drive home the subjects presented. The School sessions were usually held during the less active seasons of the year, in summer, after "laying-by" and in the winter after harvest time. Despite the fact that the popularity of the work had induced the extension authorities to employ two full time agents to carry it on a twelve months basis, its expansion was proving more and more that railroad travel was a handicap.

*See Appendix—Letter No. 7.

In 1918, we made a strong appeal to Dr. J. F. Duggar, then state director, for funds with which to purchase an automobile truck and to our delight, within the fiscal year, authorization was granted for the purchase of a complete outfit. The truck was named the "Knapp Agricultural Truck" in honor of the late Dr. Seaman A. Knapp, founder of farm demonstration work in America. It was during the lifetime of this truck that the United States Department of Agriculture made a two-reel moving picture entitled, "Helping Negroes to Become Better Farmers and Homemakers," which became a part of the regular equipment of the Movable School.

This vehicle more than replaced the mule-drawn wagon, for it made it possible for the force to cover infinitely more territory and carry additional workers and equipment. Many thickly settled communities, inaccessible by rail, were opened to the School and far more farms and homes were brought within our reach. The School became more "movable" than ever. In addition to the meetings called in public places, we went to a far greater number of farm homes, where we had at our disposal the orchard for teaching horticulture, the farm land for terracing, the growing crops for lessons in cultivation and the farm animals for study and care. The house offered a classroom for teaching cooking, canning, cleaning and the making of novelties that added a touch of color and beauty here and there.

In spite of our efforts for the betterment of farm life, progress was slow and difficult. The average Negro rural home continued to be a dilapidated shack in which the living conditions were unspeakable. These

hovels not only reflected on the Negro, but contributed more than anything else to the tumble-down appearance of the average Southern community in which both white people and Negroes lived. They conveyed a generally bad impression of shiftlessness and backwardness.

I never had this fact so forcibly impressed upon me until the noted Englishman Sir Harry Johnston, African explorer, came to this country to study the American Negro. He visited Tuskegee Institute and at his request was shown a Movable School. On his itinerary through the rural district, he came upon a shack, typical of the average Negro home. On the porch of this place a Negro man was reclining, and near-by, nibbling dry weeds, stood an overworked, underfed, sleepy mule. Sir Harry quickly called for his sketch book and in less time than it takes to tell the story, had made a perfect pencil sketch, which included the broken down fence, the poorly worked garden, the uncovered well and the open privy. When he had completed the picture, he regarded it with much pride and asked me if I knew what he planned to do with it. Upon my replying that I did not, he said, "When I return to England, I intend to make an enlarged painting of this. I shall call it "The Sleepy South." I was then and there convinced that if the South was ever to obtain its rightful position in relation to other sections of the country, it was useless to approach the problem of rural development in terms of racial separateness.

The practice of carrying the School right to the farm homes presented certain advantages over the earlier methods. The farm home became the center of interest, and where physical improvements were made, with

added comforts and beautification, it automatically became a permanent milepost in the Movable School program for rural betterment.

The wider coverage revealed the fact that a tremendous amount of sickness prevailed in a large number of the homes in every community visited. Traveling from "pillar to post" in the rural South among Negroes, and sleeping and eating wherever night overtakes one, spell ruin to health and an early end to a life of usefulness. To say that we were alarmed at many situations in which we found ourselves is putting it mildly. The truth of the matter is, we seriously considered abandoning the practice of going into the homes because of the constant danger and exposure of our workers to diseases and unsanitary conditions which we found in these homes. Being, however, so thoroughly conversant with this standard of living and so recently emerged from a similar atmosphere, I felt confident that these people were susceptible to the practical teaching we were taking to them. Instead of quitting the homes and returning to the public meeting places to conduct the schools, I sought the appointment of a registered nurse as a member of the Movable School force. The request was granted and a nurse was appointed, whose duties were mainly to look into the personal health of these people, the sanitation of their homes and surroundings, and incidentally to help the other members of the Movable School force guard against disease.

In getting the nurse started, we met some very serious difficulties. Physicians and nurses were skeptical of the plan of carrying a registered nurse with the School. They predicted many difficulties and dangers that failed

to develop. The salary of the nurse was paid jointly by Tuskegee Institute and the Alabama State Health Department. In setting up this new feature of the Movable School, it fell to me to outline the duties of the nurse. The first bases of operation were as follows:

"The Movable School nurse will depend on the Tuskegee Institute resident hospital and the Alabama State Health Department for her subject matter and the Alabama Extension Service will be responsible for her itineraries and schedules. The nurse upon arriving in a community will make as extensive a survey as is convenient, noting actual conditions in regard to sickness, sanitation, etc., and upon personal observations, will make a program for Movable School work in the community. She will call on the director of the Movable School for material needed in carrying out her demonstrations. Arrangements for visits should be made through public meetings, in churches, schools, lodge halls, for the purpose of gathering information to be used as a basis for demonstrations and instruction on public health. All surveys and inspection tours should be made and all illustrative material should be procured before the opening of the schools. When for any reason the Movable School schedule is held up, the nurse will divide her time between the twenty-seven extension agents working in the thirty Alabama counties. During these visits, a program of work similar to that carried on in the Movable School should be followed: namely, finding out at first hand the most urgent needs of the people of the community in which the work is to be done and proceeding in her own practical way to remedy these conditions. A very accurate record should be kept

of all findings, showing places and frequency of unsanitary, unhygienic conditions during her trips over the state. For future workers such a record should become invaluable in perfecting a more definite program which should at all times be applicable to rural communities."

In looking about for a suitable nurse to do this work, I found that the training and experience of nearly all applicants had been with urban conditions. After combing the field rather carefully, we selected a registered nurse who we believed would be able to carry out a program of rural health improvement. In 1920, the Department appointed Miss Uva M. Hester, a Tuskegee graduate, as the first rural nurse to work with the Movable School among Negroes in Alabama. The report which she made after her first week in the field is a vivid portrayal of conditions which are not far-fetched, but common to almost every Negro community in the South. The report covered her work in Montgomery County for the week ending Saturday, June 19, 1920, and follows:

"Tuesday: I visited a young woman who had been bedridden with tuberculosis for more than a year. There are two openings on her chest and one in the side from which pus constantly streams. In addition, there is a bedsore on the lower part of the back as large as one's hand. There were no sheets on her bed. In the absence of a basin or bowl for bathing the patient, a kitchen utensil was used. The sores had only a patch of cloth plastered over them. No effort was made to protect the patient from the flies that swarmed around her. The patient lives near a dairy but is not furnished with milk.

"Wednesday: Left boarding place at 8:00 a. m. While waiting for buggy, we visited two homes. The first family consisted of a mother and six children living in a very dirty two-room hut. The oldest child, a girl of nine years, had suffered from infantile paralysis and was left lame as a result. The baby was suffering from diarrhea and had a peculiar rash on its body. The others were apparently well, but extremely dirty. I suggested bath and a way of ridding the house of flies, also a suitable diet for the baby.

"Then to Pumpkintown. Made visits to three families. One home had the family of ten crowded into two small rooms. Seven were children. I talked with the mother regarding care of the children, emphasizing feeding, bathing, exercise, and rest. Returned to Montgomery by train.

"Thursday: I went to the State Health Department, where I was supplied with some literature on health for free distribution. Then to Pickett Springs, where we made two visits. In one home a girl was suffering from intestinal hemorrhages and other complications and was very much in need of medical attention. The home was extremely dirty. There were no screens; a cow pen was in the back yard, and the place infested with flies. There was little I could do to make the child comfortable; however, I gave a few suggestions as to diet, made her bed and tried to impress the importance of keeping out flies. The next family was considered one of the first in the community among colored people, owning a store, many acres of land and much livestock. The horse barn was in the back yard, and the toilet was but thirty feet from the back door. Although it had a ce-

ment pit, both lids were broken off the stools, and the door was off the hinges. The well stood in the lowest spot on the premises. After doing what we could to advise the family, we returned to town by team.

"Friday: I visited two communities today. The first home was in a splendid location, but its two rooms were entirely too small for the twelve people that made up the family. The second home had two rooms. There were three in this family, the mother, stepfather and a seventeen-year-old daughter who had undergone an operation for abscesses on the chest and side. She had been in a hospital. I found her lying on a bed of wheat straw, and too filthy for description. There was a profuse discharge of pus from the undressed wounds and the flies swarmed over her in such numbers that I could hardly see her face. With a branch as a fan she was making a feeble attempt to keep them off. At my suggestion, we made an old cot on the little porch as comfortable as possible and placed her on it. I gave her a bath and in doing so found that she had a pressure sore the size of my hand on the sacral region of her back, from which her backbone protruded. I dressed the wound with material from my first aid bag. While I was attending her, a white man and his wife, having seen us from the porch, came down and expressed their appreciation for what we had done for this sufferer. The girl with tears in her eyes thanked me and said if she were able to get to her grandmother's she would give me a pig for the little help I had rendered. Wishing her much comfort I said good-bye."

(Signed) Uva Mae Hester, Rural Nurse.

This report strikingly shows the vast need for this new effort in extension work among the masses and shows the importance of both outside and self-help. Indeed, to my mind, it reveals facts that should arouse interest in the question, "How are we going to meet the rural situation among Negroes?"

One of the major difficulties which we faced in treating the subject of personal hygiene was the problem of removing from the minds of those people we sought to help, many traditional superstitions relative to "signs" and the curative value of countless homemade quack remedies.

The Movable School force once went into a community just after a voodoo man had "worked" it to his financial gain. He had been able to dispose of a large number of "wonder beans," merely buckeyes, at a dollar each. Many Negroes bought these beans on the assurance that if they were worn about the necks, no bodily harm could come to them. In making one of her usual rounds, our nurse found in one home the mother smoking her two children with tar, feathers, and old shoes. On being asked why she did this, she said her children had been "running at the noses" all winter and she remembered that when she was a child, her father always smoked the mules and it helped them so she thought she would try it on her children.

With a man agent to instruct the men and boys, a woman agent to teach the women and girls, and a trained nurse to work for better health, the most important local detail in preparing for a school became the selection for a suitable location. This meant that the community had to be studied from many angles before

a decision could be reached. The house selected, first of all, should represent the average in a given community. The Negro renter, living in a one- or two-room cabin, is not quickly influenced by the progress which his Negro land-owning neighbor, living in much better circumstances than he, is making. Another important feature in selecting a location for the Movable School is that the place chosen should offer an advantage for teaching the greatest number of concrete lessons in and around the home. It is also very important that the occupants of the home selected are on friendly terms with the rest of the community. Otherwise poor attendance is likely to result.

Preparatory to serving a given community, it is customary for the Movable School force to contact and work through the agencies already on the grounds. If there are demonstration agents, they are sought. If not, a Jeanes supervisor, vocational agricultural teacher, or the local school teacher, preacher, or an officer of the local church may prove a point of contact. If the problems are approached through proper channels, it is seldom difficult to get the occupant of the house to be worked to agree to "take" the school for a given period.

Where his home is used for a demonstration, the farmer agrees to furnish all material used in making permanent improvement and to surrender his home to the Movable School force to be used as a "classroom" during the period of the school. Of course, the family has the assurance in return that under the direction of the Movable School force, the permanent improvements will be made by the attending farmers at no cost save for materials and that such parts of the home and farm

as may be used for teaching purposes will be left in a better condition.

If by chance, the farm selected be that of a tenant, the question of materials for the demonstration is taken up with the owner. It is rarely ever difficult to convince the owners that the raising of the standard of living among their tenants, improving and making their living quarters more attractive, will make the tenants more contented and appreciative of their surroundings, as well as greatly enhance the value of the farm property. The planters are often so favorable toward the Movable School that when it is announced that these demonstrations are to be held, there may be requests from several planters that they be held on their individual plantations.

Having made the proper contacts with the landowner and the occupant of the farm, the next step is to thoroughly acquaint the community with the mission of the Movable School and make clear why the session will be held at a private home instead of a public place. The farmer is made to understand, as has been said, that in the use of his house as a center for teaching the community better agriculture and better home making, his home will incidentally be improved and beautified by members of the community through having such substantial work done, such as screening the house, covering the well, painting the outbuildings, constructing a sanitary toilet, setting out an orchard, terracing the land, and renovating the interior of the house. On the other hand, the neighbors who attend are assured a period of teaching and practice in measuring and cutting lumber, mixing concrete and making whitewash, in

addition to the information gained from participation in the other activities just outlined.

Where Movable Schools have been held in their territories, effort is made by extension agents to use these initial demonstrations as the beginning of a definite and systematic method of teaching better farming and home making. Thus the tenant, the landlord, and the whole community, after taking part in one of these schools, are benefited to the extent that they are better able to appreciate the advantages obtained in this cooperative venture. As a result, it becomes less difficult to make arrangements for conducting these schools in a given county or community.

In perfecting a program for the Movable School work, many devices and methods have been tried and the Booker T. Washington idea of transporting information through the School to people has been added to and subtracted from. The turnover of the personnel of the Movable School brought us to the conclusion that the best way to standardize the system was to demonstrate only those processes that could be repeated by the average country individual. Therefore, a definite system has been adopted, despite the fact that some agents had specialities in which they were personally interested and proficient.

We decided that if the average Negro farmer and his wife and children could not repeat, reproduce, or re-enact the things done by the Movable School instructors, it was doubtful whether the subject introduced was practical or timely.

We realized that many farmers could not read or write, and for that reason we adhered to methods that

they could see and hear and understand. We strove at all times to know more about the needs of the Negro farmer for better farming methods and the needs of the farm family for better living conditions, and sought for a better understanding of ways to remedy existing conditions. This was and is still a great problem when the isolation of Negro farmers on the big plantations, out of touch with modern methods, is taken into account.

By 1923, the Movable School idea had passed the experimental stage, and was thoroughly established as a permanent factor in transporting agricultural education to rural Negroes. For five years the Knapp Truck had rambled the rural highways and byways of Macon and adjacent Alabama counties, sometimes crossing the boundary lines of the adjoining states of Mississippi and Georgia. Its fame, together with the success of its work, had won for it many friends and supporters. But no vehicle can go on indefinitely, traveling over all types of roads, without showing the stern effects of time and usage. Finally worn out and broken down, it came to the end of its life of usefulness and had to be abandoned, and some of the early means of transportation were resorted to temporarily.

Faced again with the difficulty of rail transportation the expansion of the Movable School work was for the time handicapped. Further development called for the replacing of the "Knapp Truck" with a larger and more substantial vehicle. The Negro farmers of Alabama proved to be the "men of the hour" when 30,000 of them and their friends throughout the state contributed a total of $5,000 to purchase a new truck, named the "Booker T. Washington Agricultural School on

The First and the Present Movable School on Exhibition at the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Founding of Tuskegee Institute

Wheels," and its equipment. The contributions were made as an expression of belief in this method of teaching better farming and home making, and as a memorial to the originator. That it was a memorial is strikingly evidenced by a tablet, mounted on the panels of the vehicle, which reads:

> "This Truck With Its Equipment Was Donated To The Federal And State Agricultural Extension Service By The Negro Farmers And Their Friends Of The State Of Alabama, In Appreciation Of Tuskegee Institute And In Memory Of The Late Booker T. Washington, Who Helped To Make Negro Extension Work Possible, And Who Loved The Country People And The Great Out Of Doors."

In the new truck a stock of farm implements and home conveniences, such as the average farmer is able to purchase, or construct and operate, was installed. Among the equipments carried were spraying outfits, farm levels, a set of carpenter's tools, a milk tester, an inoculating set, a lighting plant for the farm, a moving picture projector, kodaks, a sewing machine, an electric iron, a baby's bath tub, a set of baby clothes, a medicine cabinet, kitchen utensils and playground apparatus for recreational games. The new truck, like the old one, carried trained workers, a man to demonstrate the use of the farm equipment and to teach improved methods of farming; a woman to show how to make and use home conveniences, how to care for poultry, cook, sew, can, and conduct the home on a more healthful and economic basis, and a trained nurse to give demonstrations in

simple practices of home sanitation and hygiene, and care of the sick.

One of the happiest virtues in the conduct of this work has been the maintenance of a force with personality and ability to impress the lessons simply and without undue show, necessarily a strong quality for disseminating this type of information among backward people. The personnel fits, to a very gratifying degree, the qualifications laid down by the Honorable Henry Wallace, pioneer in agriculture in Iowa and grandfather of the present Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture: "A man is not fit to work with the country people unless he has smelled the soil and can converse with them in their own 'lingo.' "

In some communities, in one form or other, we have to deal with the ignorance of the tenant, the indifference of the Negro landowner and the disinterestness of the white landlord.

Because of their ignorance many tenants are often unappreciative of the advantages of higher economic standards. Most of them have no semblance of substantial home equipment. For instance, take the question of door steps. Many of them are still using teetering blocks, turned down buckets, or various other unstable means of entry with discomfort and danger to the family and visitors alike.

In a number of Southern counties there are a great many Negro farmers who own large and very fertile farms. Some of these farms adjoin plantations where tenants rent, and strange but true, there is but little difference in the homes and surroundings of the Negro landowners and tenants. In one community we found

a farmer who owned 300 acres of land and had just bargained for 200 acres more. He had a splendid stock barn, but his home consisted of two small rooms, no window lights, no steps to either of the two outer doors, and no fence of any kind about the yard. Although there were eleven children in the family, there was no toilet on the place. His status was entirely due to his indifference, for with a small amount of money and labor he could have remedied this situation.

Failure to appreciate the proverbial "an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure." The ignorant rural Negro often allows his home to become or remain a run down shack, around which health conditions become so terrible that the way is paved for the most ravaging diseases. As a result he is obliged to pay excessive doctor bills, and experiences a high mortality among the members of his family. It is through these and many other similar deplorable conditions that the Movable School force attempts to work its way to the bottom of the rural Negro's problem.

A session of the Movable School conducted shortly after the purchasing of the new truck in 1923 is a concrete example of the approach and methods used in working with tenant farmers. Having decided on the section of the county in which we were to hold a school, we selected a little weather-beaten house, a few paces from the road. It was a typical rural home and was almost hidden by tall weeds and hedge. The window lights were broken out; there were no steps to the doorways, although one of these was quite two and a half feet from the ground. There was no toilet of any kind on the place. The poultry house was both poorly con-

structed and poorly kept. The few trees that comprised the orchard had had little attention. The hillside was washed away, and the whole place sorely run down. We felt that here was our opportunity to demonstrate a few simple lessons to both the tenants and the community.

We explained to the tenant that in order to perform the demonstration certain material would have to be provided. The man needed the improvements and wanted the school to be conducted at his home, but was unable to provide the material needed. Upon our suggestion he took us to the landlord that we might explain to him the value of an investment in furnishing material for the repair of the place. We told him that all of the tenants would have an opportunity of learning to do many things that would greatly increase the value of the plantation as well as raise the standard of living of the entire community, when put into practice at their homes. Convinced of the value of the effect of the demonstration, both directly and indirectly, the landlord ordered the material at an approximate cost of $65.00.

After these arrangements had been made the next step was to set the date and notify the community, which was done with the aid of the county demonstration agent. The Movable School, owing to its novel and practical aspect, was of sufficient interest to cause the farmers and their families to assemble in large numbers at the site of the demonstration. Long before the appointed time, some on foot, a few mounted on plow mules and others with their families in wagons or in the family car, usually an old "Ford," gathered at the designated home. Arriving, they greeted each other,

made themselves at home and awaited the coming of the Movable School.

The truck arrived on schedule time, carrying a personnel of five, the regular staff of three and both the county farm and home demonstration agents. The director in calling the meeting to order followed the rural custom by beginning the program with a brief religious service, songs and prayer. This permitted the ministers present to come forward and receive the recognition due their position in the community. Since there are, invariably, two or three different church followings at these demonstrations, the leader usually calls on a member of each church to take some part in the opening ceremonies. Two or three plantation melodies are sufficient to arouse the gathering to jubilant expectations for the sessions of the Movable School, and the director immediately took this advantage to clarify any misapprehension of favoritism in respect to the selection of the particular tenant premises.

"The members of the Movable School staff," the director told them, "know nothing of the family, or church connections, but are concerned only with the choice of the tenant's premises because of its convenience to the whole community, and because such improvements as are shortly to be introduced shall enable all of you to likewise improve your homes and your farms. The improvements are to serve as models for you to stop here, from time to time, and refresh your memories and imitate at your own homes. The main object is to stimulate a desire for improved premises and better tools with which to work. We have found that the best results can be obtained by doing these

things right before your eyes. Then you will want to do more, to dignify yourselves by making your homes more attractive and your farms more remunerative.

"In selecting these unkept premises, care has been taken lest the choice defeat the main purpose of the demonstration. Experience has taught us that the occupant of the dwelling and farm must be generally esteemed on the plantation; otherwise his fellow tenants and their families will not rally whole-heartedly to approve or to render assistance in the cooperative activities that characterize the sessions of the Movable School. This dwelling, when improved, will present an impressive and striking contrast to the present surroundings.

"In the presence of you five hundred men, women and children living on this 'place', and of the others of the community, the following demonstrations will be made: the proper care of field and garden crops; effective terracing of the land and intelligent cultivation of soil; pruning and spraying fruit trees; construction of and repairing simple articles of clothing and bed linen; making and using a fireless cooker; selecting eggs for hatching, and care of chicks; building outside steps; locating and constructing a sanitary toilet; recreational methods; and proper health practices."

Following detailed instruction as to what was expected of each member of the group, classes were quickly formed and we began the actual demonstrations. The women were attracted and directed to those demonstrations that concerned the household, the men to those of the orchard, garden and field. Separate sessions in some activities were carried on simultaneously.

The unit operations were repeated as often as necessary to allow all groups to observe or take an active part in the demonstrations.

All of the demonstrations were given amidst eager curiosity and evident appreciation on the part of the tenants and their families. That "chop'n cot'n" need not be made a continuous and terrible strain on women and children aroused hope for a long needed relief. The farmers were shown that frequent and shallow cultivation not only keeps down the "Johnson grass," but what is of far greater importance to plant growth, keeps the soil about the plant roots in a condition favorable to the admission of air and aids in the retention of moisture. This new information on plowing appealed greatly to these simple tenant farmers, suggesting a conserving of the moisture supply a method of which they had never before thought.

The "dirt" farmer of the Movable School staff took charge of the harrow and proceeded to give an example of shallow cultivation close up to the rows of growing plants, without injuring the tender stalks or disturbing the roots. The men watched the movement of the man, the mule and the harrow with a kind of fascinated curiosity, readily catching the significance of the whole procedure. The demonstrator told them that by frequent harrowing, the grass can gain no headway; the soil is kept loose, the marginal row is narrow, and "chop'n cot'n" is easy.

Another group was cluttered around or taking part in the building of steps. The old log was rolled away and the new steps with three treads were put in its place. The farm mechanic of the staff pointed to the

better appearance and the greater safety of the steps as compared to the treacherous log. He showed the group that steps like these could be constructed with less cost in time and energy than it would take to go to the woods, cut, and bring such a log and place it before the doorway. The workers next moved to the site selected for the location of a sanitary toilet. Under direction of the agent they quickly built a suitable toilet, where as before there had been none of any kind on the place.

In the meantime the women were busy with the household activities, under the direction of the home demonstration agent. The cabin was cleaned and otherwise set in order as a demonstration of what a cabin could and should be like. White curtains were made and hung at the windows; the floors were scrubbed; and pretty rugs, made by the women, were placed on the floors. Other demonstrations were given in the selection and testing of eggs by means of a simple home made device. Those judged unsuitable for hatching, but otherwise serviceable, were put in a preserving fluid prepared on the scene. A simple and inexpensive hat was made and sold at cost to one of the women present. A fireless cooker was constructed out of inexpensive materials and put to immediate use in the preparation of a balanced dinner which was served on a properly set table.

The electric plant of the truck was used to demonstrate the advantages of a few home conveniences. An electric line was run into the house, providing temporary wiring for the electric devices. An electrically operated washing machine, a cream separator, a churn, and an

electric iron were demonstrated. In one of the rooms, under the direction of the school nurse, mothers sat in a semicircle with babies in arms, eagerly observing the demonstration of the proper way to bathe a baby. In one corner of the room a very cozy little baby bed was made of two chairs pushed together, a pillow for a mattress, and covered with a white sheet.

The nurse started her demonstrations by telling of the needs of sanitary and correct methods of caring for the nursing child. She prepared for the baby's bath by heating the water, arranging the soap, towels, and all other necessities, and, with the mothers looking on, bathed the child, dressed it in snowy white clothing and returned it to its mother.

She next instructed the mothers on the care of their children, how to maintain the home in a sanitary and healthful condition, what foods to prepare and advised what simple but efficient home remedies to use when any of the family became sick. Information was given as to proper baby feeding, the treatment of infectious diseases of children, malnutrition, adenoids, tonsils and bad teeth. Three midwives were present and among other things were advised to use rubber gloves in their work. Demonstrations were given in making paper pads, baby beds and maternity bundles, and in home nursing. Literature on infant and maternity care was distributed by the nurse.

At noon the farmers gathered in groups to eat their lunches, which they had brought in much the same fashion that children carry their lunches to school. During the hour, the farmers carried on rapid fire conversation on the "wonders" that had been enacted dur-

ing the morning session and were curious to know what would take place in the afternoon.

After lunch the sessions of the school were resumed and the workers were assigned new tasks.

For the men, the afternoon opened with a demonstration in the pruning and spraying of fruit trees. Implements used for this purpose were a pruning saw, a pair of hand pruning shears, a pair of long handled prunning shears to reach the limbs above the head, and a small cylinder spray pump. The farmers were told that these tools could be purchased for a nominal sum. In the process of pruning and spraying, each of these implements was demonstrated. The agent gave the farmers information on the time of year and the height and the number of buds and branches to be retained on each kind of fruit tree. He pointed out some of the diseases of trees and showed remedies to be used in the various cases.

One group had cleaned the front yard, planted flower seeds, set out trees and shrubbery procured from the neighboring woodland, and plowed and planted a garden. Another class had made repairs on the house and screened the windows and doors. Before evening had come demonstrations had been given in the sharpening and setting of saw teeth, the sharpening of other tools and repairing of farm implements.

During the afternoon the women agents continued their program of home making. Classes were continued in making various articles that would make the dwelling more tidy, and homelike, soap making was demonstrated; articles of clothing were made, kitchen uten-

sils repaired; and lessons in scrubbing and laundering given.

The Movable School nurse continued her classes in the care of children and the sick. She pointed out the need of more attention to the health of the entire family. Sickness, she told them, was too often caused by unsanitary conditions, and death usually followed when herbs and roots and other concoctions were depended on to bring cures instead of proper medical attention. She emphasized the importance to health of sanitary drinking cups, telling the people that many diseases were spread from one member to another of the rural family and from one family to other families through the use of the old common dipper. She taught each person in her audience to make an individual drinking cup.

There was never a pupil in any school who didn't look forward to recess as one of the most delightful times of the day. This Movable School would not be a school without a recess. The recreation period came from four to five o'clock in the afternoon after the demonstrations were over. The tenants and their families were assembled for a program of organized play. All the students, both young and old, were taught to play amusing games, and shown the advantages and benefits derived from supervised play. Volley ball, tug-of-war, foot races and other simple sports were entered into with surprising zeal. It was gratifying to see how easily for the time some of the older folk forgot their aches and infirmities and enjoyed the contest just as thoroughly as their youthful sons and daughters. This diversion

gave much satisfaction to the pupils and heightened the spirit of neighborliness.

When night came, the motion picture machine was set up and films were shown and some of the farmers were given their first view of "movies." The pictures were usually educational ones and together with phonograph concerts, they furnished an enjoyable evening's entertainment.

Thus ended a typical one-day session of the Movable School on a tenant farm. Every moment, from the time the director took charge of the opening ceremony till the last click of the picture machine and the last sound from the phonographic record, was one of interest, profit and enjoyment. When the Movable School departed, it left a model for the community so that those who were unable to attend the demonstrations were afforded an opportunity to get information and inspiration by simply looking on the finished work. It is not difficult to understand the influence a School like this must have upon a group of people whose lives have been so simple and so empty; and how much good it must leave behind when it rolls away to its next appointment.

CHAPTER THREE

Exemplary Achievements

FROM TIME TO TIME I am asked if the farmers put into practice the things that they are taught by the Movable School. The best answer that I can give is found in the number of farm families which actually adopt the lessons taught by applying them to their everyday needs. The "Hill Taylor Project" has been an outstanding example of results of the work of the Movable School, coordinated with the regular Extension Service.

Hill Taylor, a Negro farmer, who owns 518 acres of land in Macon County, Alabama, was asked some years ago by the Movable School force to permit the use of his home and farm as a demonstration site for the sixty-five families living in his community. Mr. Taylor agreed. To show how popular the project was, from actual count we found that one or more persons from these sixty-five families were present each day and took some part in the demonstrations. There was a daily average of about 107, while the total for the week reached 535. These persons represented families within a radius of twelve miles.

In this instance we approached our project on a reverse procedure. Instead of building up the farm so that we could get to the home later, we began with the home and extended our efforts from there to the farm. We kept in mind that this particular project was to be

used from time to time by the general Extension Service somewhat as a laboratory in order to test out the practicability of numerous ideas which we had not been able to try out fully in the rather transient program. We made an intensive study of all the articles around the home and premises that could be utilized in our practice of rigid economy. Mention of how these articles were used will be made later.

Guided by the Movable School force, the visiting farmers and their families worked wonders at this home during the week. The old fence was removed and in its place a hedge was set. The lawn was sodded; flowers and shrubbery were planted. The old window blinds were taken off and broken windowpanes replaced. Curtains were made, stenciled and hung at the windows. The living room, hall and bedroom were refinished. Mrs. Taylor induced her husband, "Hill," as she calls him, to buy more than $250.00 worth of furniture. This included a living room set, consisting of a davenport, two comfortable chairs, a library table and a rug, as well as chairs for one bedroom. Appropriate pictures were framed and properly hung; bed spreads and scarfs were made from unbleached muslin; and rugs were made from fertilizer sacks, corn shucks and salvaged rags, which had been washed and dyed, to harmonize with the furnishings.

Furnishings renovated consisted of two tables, a safe, bureau, washstand, three chairs, a hat rack, a kitchen cabinet, and a kitchen table. The interior was simplified by the removal of all unnecessary bric-a-brac.

We did just enough during that time to make a striking contrast between the "improved" and "unimproved."

Mr. Taylor and his family were somewhat ashamed to have visitors come in and inspect, so they readily consented to proposed changes. A local carpenter was called in to make additions to the home. From the time of the first work until the project was completed, about six months later, approximately $1,600.00 had been spent for improvements.

This sum covered the building of a kitchen, dining room, bath room, back porch, electric power plant, electric wiring, installing of plumbing and bath room fixtures, as well as painting and screening.

Tuskegee Institute, as has always been its custom, cooperated with the Movable School, and several departments worked hand in hand with the School force. In this project a group of young women from the home economics department assisted with the home decorating, while the young men from their respective trades divisions assisted with the wiring, plumbing and painting.

Dr. Robert R. Moton, principal of Tuskegee Institute, speaking to the group in attendance at the completion of the Taylor project said, "A very beautiful and attractive home has been arranged here. I am glad to come back and see the wonderful improvement made since my last visit here. I wanted to see at first hand a Movable School in operation, so I came early, and walked all around. I want to congratulate Mr. and Mrs. Taylor on this home. Dr. Washington used to tell a story of a man who was asked where he lived. He didn't live anywhere, he said, but he *stayed* over there on the hill. Lots of people don't live anywhere; they simply stay on their land. Mr. Taylor is a very successful farmer

and a good business man, but he neglected his home. Some men neglect their wives and children. Now he has a lovely home beautified under extension supervision. I remember when I was a boy, I had to go down to the branch when I washed. It wasn't bathing then, as you call it now; it was washing. We had to do most of the washing in the summer time. Mr. Taylor has this nice porcelain bath tub in which to take a bath when he and the boys come in from the field. Again, I want to congratulate them for the things they have done for themselves and for this community."

With the Hill Taylor project* we attempted to do something so permanent that for the next ten years the example would be there, not only as something by which to show the results of extension work, but something that the owners can enjoy. What we have tried to do was to take one step at a time. Years ago, Dr. Seaman A. Knapp, founder of the demonstration work in America, taught that "one's usefulness in demonstration work does not consist in the number of subjects he discusses or suggests, but rather in taking one thing at a time and driving that to completion."

Looking through this house, some may say, "Of course, it's very good, but the average man cannot do it. It costs too much." All of the improvements that were done on this project did not exceed $1600.00, just a little more than the price of an automobile, and Negro farmers, like others, are buying automobiles. We feel that Extension Service is old enough for us to approach the farmers with whom we have been working and ask

* Letters and expressions showing favorable reaction to this demonstration appear in the Appendix.

The Hill Taylor and Similar Projects Have Inspired Many Families to Take Their First Step Towards Home Improvement

Top and Bottom Left: After the Movable School
Top and Bottom Right: Before the Movable School Came
Center: A Terracing Demonstration

The Mary Simpson-Carliss Project Commands the Respect and Admiration of the People in Her Community
Picture Shows the New Home: Living Room, Dining Room, Kitchen and Bath

them to spend some of their money in home improvement, so that they may live comfortably and keep their children at home.

The effect that this one home has had on other Negro farmers in this and adjacent counties in Alabama is marvelous. Agents from other counties and prospective farmers have visited the project with a view of obtaining an idea of what may be accomplished in home devlopment in the country. The results from some of the visits have been so inspiring that we offer, in full, two or three stories, all written personally.

Story Of Mrs. Mary Simpson, Macon County

"From childhood I have always had a habit of wanting something a little better than what I had. There were only two people in the community where I came up who owned two-horse wagons. We used to go through the near-by communities on Sundays, and I always wanted every good looking house I saw. We didn't see many, except those of the white folk. My father told me that if I would cook for him until he paid for his land he would send me to Tuskegee. I worked for four years, but he did not send me. I had no money, and I felt that if I couldn't get an education I would at least have a home of my own. So I "jumped up" and married, but in eleven months I was a widow and went back to live with my father.

"When I was fourteen I had a chance to see inside of the home of Mr. Warren Logan of Tuskegee and that of Mrs. Evalina Cooper. I saw that they had dining rooms. I always wanted one. Nobody in our community had a dining room, or a toilet. They cooked, ate and

slept in their kitchens. I came back and moved the bed out of the kitchen. My father had an old outhouse that was falling down. I tore it down and with the lumber made a partition in the kitchen. A little boy about fourteen years of age helped me. I was so proud of my dining room. I took the rest of the lumber and with the aid of the boy built a toilet on the outside. My father did not fuss. He just said, "Mary sho' is a sight. I 'oughter' educate her. But he didn't. So at the age of seventeen, I left home and went to Tuskegee. Papa was mad and wouldn't give me a cent. I lived with Mrs. Penny the first year and worked for her. The second year I left home with twenty-five cents in my pocket. On my way I bought a comb with ten cents of my money, so I had only fifteen cents left when I got to Tuskegee. I kept that fifteen cents from September until May, because I was afraid to spend it. I feared I would need it for something worse. It was a tough time for me, but I went to Tuskegee three years, working all day long and going to school at night. I had but one apron to my name, and used to wash it out every night and dry it, and then iron it by passing it over a hot lamp chimney when nobody was looking. Next morning I would have a clean apron like the rest of the girls who worked in the kitchen.

"My health got bad and I just couldn't keep on. I returned home and said if I couldn't get an education I would at least try to have some things like I wanted. So I married again, and started out, working to have a house like I wanted. My husband and I bought forty acres of land and built a two-room house on it. As soon as I got a chance I put up a partition in that kitchen,

too, so I could have me a dining room. This made the little kitchen so small I could hardly turn around in it. My husband didn't like it. He thought I wanted to live too high. We just couldn't get along, because our ideas were so very different. In spite of that we lived together eighteen years. He didn't want the kind of things I wanted; and it was getting worse, so we separated. By this time we had bought another forty acres of land. I bought my husband's half from him, which gave me eighty acres.

"From then on I was my own manager and looked after my business, and accumulated what I now have. I later bought another eighty acres of land. I improved the little house and insured it.

"I always tried to follow the advice of Booker T. Washington. I would never take up all my credit at the store. I would take eggs, chickens and other things to town to sell for what I needed in exchange. Now, I sell cream. I have Barred Rock chickens and a good grade of hogs. I plant cover crops. All my hilly lands are terraced and my tenant houses are ceiled. I have two tenants, one on each place. Both are 'halfers.'

"My house burned a few years ago and my neighbors told me to take my insurance money and buy a big car. But I wouldn't listen. As soon as I could, I got in touch with Mrs. L. R. Daly, my home demonstration agent, because I knew of how she had helped to improve the Hill Taylor place in another community. She took me out to see it, and told me she would help me to get plans together for a new house, and could get it done much cheaper. I was so glad, because I knew the home demonstration agent could be of so much help to the

people. I wanted a big house, but she showed me how much material would be wasted with the help of the man who had done the building at Hill Taylor's, my little house went up. I am proud of it. A lot of people from many places have been out to see it and the always praise me. One white woman in the county came to visit me, and called her sister and said, "Look here, Mary's house is as nice as mine."

"I always wanted a certificate of some kind. My eyes always become wet when I would go to the Tuskkegee commencement and see the girls getting diplomas and certificates. I envied them, because I couldn't stay in school and get one. But last year when I was awarded this Merit Farmer's Certificate* at the Tuskegee Farmers Conference, I didnt' know what to make of myself. I couldn't believe my own eyes. I was so glad that I stayed awake all the following night. I just didn't expect a certificate at this age. I am fifty-four years old. I was so happy; but all along when sometimes it looked like there wasn't any hope for me, I use to keep saying to myself: 'Delight thyself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart.' "

Tom Moss, of Dallas County, Alabama, tells the following story:

Statement of Tom Moss

"I lived on a big plantation before I came here. I moved away in 1920 and bought this place. I paid $1320 for eighty acres and made the 1921 crop on it. During

* A certificate recognizing the meritorious farming of Negroes in the South, issued by Tuskegee Institute, in cooperation with the Extension Service at its annual Farmers Conferences. Mrs. Simpson is the only woman to have been thus honored.

The Tom Moss Project Further Demonstrates the Efficacy of Selecting the Individual Family to Teach Fundamental Lessons to a Community

Top: Tom Moss and Family in Living Room
Center: The Old House
Bottom: The Present Moss Home

Since O. C. Crowe Renovated His Premises, He Has Been Classed as an "A Grade Dairyman" by the Montgomery County Health Authorities. Tuskegee Institute Has Also Honored Him with the Certificate of "Merit Farmer"

Top: Dining Room With Old Furniture Renovated
Center: The Original Quarters
Bottom: The Home Remodelled with Screened-in Back Porch

these years my crops were very small. Until I met the county agent, I made from five to six bales of cotton a year on twenty acres of land. I used a lot of commercial fertilizer, too. It was in 1928 that I met the county agent at a dairy meeting at the New Bright Church. I had heard about him, and I wanted to talk with him to see if he could help me with my farm problems. I wanted to know how I could raise average crops. The white county agent was with him at the time I met him and together they told me about the planting of winter cover crops. They came to see my farm. The soil was run down and in a poor condition. They suggested that I plant a few acres in winter cover crops.

"In the fall of that year I planted two acres of hairy vetch, and in the following spring I planted corn behind the vetch. I was surprised at my corn. The increase was about twenty bushels per acre. After these results I put in fourteen acres the following fall and fenced them in. I planted twelve acres of cotton and made over eight bales on the plot. I felt that I was beginning to get somewhere. Every year afterwards, I was able to save a little money. I began to buy better farm tools and a better grade of hogs and chickens.

"Our house was an old camp house, left on the place by saw mill hands. In July, 1929, the farm and home demonstration agents took my wife and me to Macon County to see the Hill Taylor place. We looked at the house and heard the story of how it was fixed up and everything improved. We didn't know that things like that could be done in the country, especially the home convenience. It was mighty fine and set us thinking.

"In the spring of 1930 we asked if the Movable School could come to our community in Dallas County. It came and held a one-day school at our house. The day seemed short, but we learned many different things about how to make the house look better and how to make a lot of useful things out of almost nothing. They took worn out objects and made pretty rugs and gave us some nice ideas about inexpensive curtains and how to paint over some old furniture. On the outside, they pruned some trees and taught a lot of other things. This opened our eyes more fully. In the fall of the year we began building our house with plans furnished by Mr. Boynton, the county agent. The house cost us $1800, which we paid for in cash. We had to call on the agents again and again for the helpful ideas and advice about building the house, because we didn't want to waste any money. By keeping in touch with them, we secured a nice house and built it more cheaply than we otherwise would have. We are proud of our new home and hope to make more improvements on it within the next year. We plan to put in water and lights. I believe our home has been the eye-opener to the community. In the beginning our neighbors did not think well of the idea of spending that much money for a house. They thought the house was too fine. They said the Movable School and the county agents would lead me to the poor house and that I would have to beg bread. But now they see differently, and one man who has since built a nice home says he got the idea from us. Others say they are going to do the same thing.

Story of O. C. Crowe, Montgomery County, Alabama

"I used to hear Dr. Washington speak about 'owning your home' and 'living at home' and a man named Stokes used to tell me how my father used to pay rent year after year; enough to have bought a farm twice the size he was paying rent on. I rented this place in 1916. I wanted to own it, but didn't have the money. In 1917, I borrowed $200.00 to make the down payment on six acres, a house, a store and a barn. The man gave me terms of $200.00 a year, skipping the first year. I sold hogs that year and made the payment. After I finished paying for this I was able to buy thirty acres more, which I paid for in the same way. Two years later I bought five and one-half acres. I made all the payments with money from the sale of pigs and cattle.

"We lived in a little three-room house with an ell and a small porch. At the opening of the Hill Taylor project in Macon County, my farm and home demonstration agent took my wife and me to see it. On our way back we talked about it, especially the bath room. My wife said she had forty-five dollars that her father gave her. She thought we could use it to buy a bath tub.

"We sent for a carpenter to cut off enough space in the house to put in this bath and fixtures, but after looking every thing over, we found a little remodeling would have to be done before we could put in a bath. As the house stood we would have to go through two rooms to get to the bath. We wanted it so it could be entered from two doors. After the remodeling was finished we had a nice, cozy little house. With the help of extension forces, old furniture was made over, curtains

were hung at the windows at little cost, rugs and other useful articles were placed in the home."

Some of the most outstanding testimonials to the value of the work of the Alabama Movable School were reflected in letters from delegates to the 1930 meeting of the National Tuberculosis Association, before which the Movable School was invited to give a series of demonstrations. The meeting was held in Memphis, Tennessee, and was attended by more than 350 delegates, secretaries and physicians from various parts of the country. Because of the success of its method of contacting rural farmers, especially in Alabama, Dr. Philip B. Jacobs, of New York City, director of publications for the association, felt that the appearance of the Movable School before this meeting would offer a new opportunity to introduce this successful technique of teaching in rural education.

Nearly all the persons attending the convention were present for the series of Movable School demonstrations, which included inoculating a pig against cholera; making the tubercular patient comfortable and safeguarding those who must come in contact with him; gardening; testing milk; making a baby bed; making and using a fireless cooker (cooking a chicken and displaying a meal); a practical method of introducing color in the home; and renovation of walls. The half-day program of demonstrations was given in the same manner as when done in the field, and held the attention of the audience. A thirty-minute discussion of the work which had been planned was omitted. The chairman felt that the demonstrations were so explicit and thorough that a discussion of them in that meeting would not

in any way add to their value or to their effectiveness.

The idea of carrying education to the very doors of rural people seems to have so completely met the needs of farm folk that visitors from Africa, India, China, Japan, Poland, Russia and many other countries have journeyed to Alabama to make a first hand study of it. Educators, social workers, Red Cross and public workers see in it wonderful possibilities for developing backward peoples. Many have taken the idea back to their countries and are putting it into practice with such modifications and changes as will adapt it to their needs.

For instance in Kavaje, Albania, they are trying something of the sort. Instead of its being a "School on Wheels," however, it takes the form of a "Donkey Back School," for the majority of the villages that are most in need of help are inaccessible to anything on wheels.

In 1929, the Madras Agriculture Department (India) put on a traveling motor exhibition as a means of instruction for the peasants. This outfit resembles our own Movable School truck, and in construction and equipment is designed to meet similar needs. To Sangli (also in India) have gone our plans and set-up. The Industrial and Agricultural School there is working on the same type of methods for reaching out to the natives in their homes, while the school teaches the children.

The Ting Hsien Experiment in Hopei, China, is another instance of the spreading influence of Movable School work. Their sessions are longer—some lasting for a period of six weeks—but the method is practically the same as our own, except that the teaching is devoted almost entirely to farm practices with the men.

These short term pupils are graduated from the course, and serve as leaders of their communities.

For several years we have furnished the Near East Foundation with plans and programs with a view to expanding and improving extension work already being carried on in refugee villages in the section of Greece called Macedonia. These villagers are as primitive as the most backward Negroes of the South, hence the simplest of our methods and equipment had to be used.

Possibly the most striking foreign comment on the effect of Movable School work comes to us from Father Harry Buck, of St. Augustine's Mission, Penbalonga, South Rhodesia:

"Surely nothing could be more helpful and beneficial to the great rural population of the Southern States than the unselfish efforts of the farm and home demonstrators. The results of their work are evident wherever they have been, and it is really impressive to visit the people and farms and homes to see these results. But still more impressed was I with the Movable School which goes out from Tuskegee Institute through all the counties of Alabama. To see it at work was an inspiration and the value of the consecrated efforts of the demonstrators, the trained nurse, the home economics teachers and the extension workers, giving such simple, practical, and obviously useful instruction in a community, cannot be estimated."

Three years later the government of South Rhodesia started the work. They now have demonstrators at work in many of the native reserves, and many more workers in training.

CHAPTER FOUR

Prospects of Rural Life Among Negroes

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON was the first Negro to seriously advocate teaching the masses of rural people outside the classroom. At first his plan of carrying the school to the farmer was rather dubiously observed. Certainly this was a new idea in sending out Negro teachers to teach without textbooks or school rooms; the rural home to constitute the classroom, and the farmer and his family the pupils. Dr. Washington sought to improve conditions under which the majority of Negroes lived rather than to instruct them according to the academic methods then current. He also sought to reach a larger number of Negro farmers from backward sections than could possibly come to the Farmers Conferences. Many said that it could not be done, while others said it was not based on sound principles of teaching. White landowners and others at first questioned the advisability of having Negro agriculturists come, especially among their tenants, lest something be done to disturb the established plantation relationships.

Because of these attitudes and the fact that the masses of Negroes themselves were none too receptive to ideas that meant more rigid application to duty for them, a work of this kind, had to be approached with much tact, with great patience and with a genuine love for service.

I fear the critics are too severe in their assertion that the Negro farmer does not yet measure up to the average standards in production; does not know how to market his crops; does not seem to manifest interest in buying land, improving his home, safeguarding his health and properly educating his children. Ofttimes he is not to blame. It is simply this system of tenancy, or living from hand to mouth, that has taken hold of the people to such an extent that it affects the whole life and psychology of the average Negro community as it likewise terribly retards the economic development of the entire South.

The words of the old plantation melody, "Nobody Knows de Trouble I Sees," serve now as they did in even darker days as an outlet of expression of the Negro farmers' present plight. There are very few of them who are not willing to go without sufficient food, clothing and shelter to satisfy their creditors, and at the same time, give their children a better chance than they had.

Approximately fifty per cent of the rural Negro boys and girls are children of parents who each year mortgage all of their personal property and the labor of their families for funds or provisions with which to make the current crop. This practice binds the whole family; neither the parents' nor the children's time is their own.

Those of us who happen to have been born on Southern plantations have vivid memories of hearing the landlord announce to our parents about the middle of January each year, that owing to the fact that it was time to begin "strewing guano" and scattering manure over the cotton land, they would have to take their children out of school to perform this operation. After the land was

prepared, the crop planted, worked and "laid by" in July, our hearts would be made glad as we were sent forth once more with our books and dinner pails to the little school down on the creek. All went well with us until the middle of August, when notice came again from the landlord that because the cotton was opening, it was necessary for all hands to turn to gathering the fleecy staple. The result now is as it was then: thousands of rural Negro children growing into manhood and womanhood dangerously and pitifully ignorant. The same system affects the Negro's religious life as well. Rural Negro preachers are cognizant of this fact, for many of them have been given "walking papers" by white plantation owners, forcing them hurriedly out of certain communities where they attempted to carry on their revival efforts during cotton chopping or picking time.

There are to be found professional promoters who have drifted into the vicious practice of advising all Negroes to remain in the country at any cost. In their frenzied zeal, they are wont to picture to them the beauties of nature, the golden sunset, the babbling brooks, and the singing birds. But all of these have little of beauty and grandeur to the Negro farmer, who is constantly in debt, hungry, sick and cold, and without civil protection. The fact might just as well be acknowledged that unless Negroes who are urged to return to the farm from the cities, and those who are now living in the rural districts, are accorded fuller protection of the law and are given more freedom to improve without intimidation, such exhortations will not prove very effective.

Too many of us in the South still live in the past in "the good old slavery-time days." We sing of the "little

old log cabin" and the "old oaken bucket," but someone has aptly said, that to live in this little old log cabin in this day and time is not at all in keeping with present day civilization and its trends; that it is all right to sing about the "old oaken bucket," but woe unto him who dares to drink from it, because it is full of germs, spreading disease and death among those who promiscuously drink after one another.

I admit it is no easy task to get away from these sentiments. Some time ago I was exhibiting "before and after" pictures of a Negro home improvement project. The first picture showed an old dilapidated shack before any extension teaching had been done, and another picture showed a transformation of the same house and its surroundings. A white observer, upon inspecting this exhibit, remarked that it was evidently a good job, but it seemed such a pity to spoil the beautiful, old, picturesque scenes as shown by the first illustration.

Some of the Southern States have at various times put on extensive advertising campaigns to attract white farmers from other sections of the country to the South and to occupy the lands, planted to cotton and cultivated by Negro farmers, prior to the invasion of the Mexican cotton boll weevil. This may be an excellent idea, but it is one that should be judiciously projected. The South would do well, perhaps, to develop its present available labor rather than advertise and offer inducement to people in other parts of this and other countries to settle in its midst.

The Negro already located on the farm is not overenthusiastic over the idea of this "back-to-the-farm" movement of white people from other sections. I am

told of a conversation between a white landlord and his Negro tenant. The landlord said to the tenant, "We have on foot a plan to bring in a lot of Western farmers to settle here in the South, and if they come, it might put some of you Negro farmers out of business. What do you think about it? The tenant asked the landlord if they were white people. The landlord replied that they were; whereupon the Negro answered, "I am not in favor of it. Us colored folks has got jes' as many white folks here as we can take care of already."

Some are wont to offer as an excuse for abandoning the Negro as a farm laborer in the South, that he is incapable of learning how to do what is called diversified farming, maintaining that he is fit only for handling mules and raising cotton. It is perhaps overlooked that the white man has taught the Negro his skill in handling mules and raising cotton. This being true, it would seem that the same teacher might not find it so difficult to train the Negro to operate a tractor, to use a cream separator, to milk and properly feed dairy cows, to operate a poultry farm, to terrace and save the worn-out cotton lands, to spray and prune fruit trees, and to grade, crate and ship marketable products. These are some of the comparatively new ideas that are being introduced and developed in the South's progressive program; and certainly those who do much of the actual work with their hands are entitled to more definite instruction, and if adequately trained, would prove far more productive and profitable.

Some economists say that in the near future the United States will largely depend upon the South for its food and feed stuffs. If this is true, the South will not

be able to meet this demand unless it has a more uniform system of labor supply and control.

Agriculture in the South today may be likened unto a huge army with part of its soldiers being trained and organized, and the other part untrained and unorganized, lagging behind and retarding the whole. Just so long as the five million Negro farmers in the South remain an unorganized mass, they will be a millstone around the white farmers' necks and both will be held down together.

Several organizations have come into existence in the South during the past few years with the object of strengthening all forms of agriculture, but most of these have fallen short of their purpose, largely because the Negro farmer, who composes so large a portion of the farming population, is left almost completely out of the picture. It is true that a few Negro farmers here and there are permitted and encouraged to join cooperative agencies, but the number is negligible when compared with the masses not included. If the Negro farmer, regardless of his status, whether owner, renter, or share cropper, can be enabled to borrow nominal sums of money at reasonable rates of interest, comparable to rates charged his neighbor, the white farmer, and can be assured that his interests will be protected, a change for the better will surely come.

The South must also give more attention to the health of rural Negroes. Possibly the most neglected phase of public service today among them is sanitation and simple health instruction. Negro farmers are not likely to give much attention to hogs stricken with cholera, nor to weevil-infested cotton, when their families are suffer-

ing from tuberculosis, typhoid, malaria and hookworm disease. The squalor, filth, disease and dilapidation of their surroundings reflect not only upon them, but upon the whole South; and this condition constitutes not only a Negro problem, nor a Southern problem, but a national one.

When we face the facts squarely, we realize that life for most Negroes in the rural districts of the South today is fraught with many hardships, much toil, exposure of body and the inevitable blighting of hopes of progress and accumulation of homes and farms or of making capable men and women of their children. In this connection it is quite evident that the Movable School type of extension work among Negroes is a godsend, bringing hope and guidance to a comparatively large group of men and women, many of whom are on the verge of abandoning farm life.

The Movable School has succeeded in proving for rural Negroes Booker Washington's theory that "We shall prosper in proportion as we learn to dignify and glorify labor and put brains and skill into the common occupations of life." This system of teaching is a boon to the rural folk and serves not only as a medium of agricultural instruction, but also as a social stimulant in the backward communities. The workers get into the lives of the farmers, and their families, first of all, by gaining their confidence. They converse with them in their own language about their problems, real and imaginary; they encourage parents to send their children to school; they often spend nights around the fireside with them and listen to interesting stories pertaining to the local history of their communities; they break down

superstition; they help make greater the sympathy of the two races for each other, and they do untold good toward developing more intelligent, peaceful and contented citizens.

It may well be repeated that in conducting these schools, very little lecturing is done. The farmers are taught how to do, under the supervision of the instructors, and the demonstrations go a long way toward stimulating the interest of the Negro farmer in his home and strengthening his attachment to it, even though he may not own it. The schools also have a tendency to arouse in the tenants a desire to own property, encourage owners to improve that which they have, and help the country women to adopt practical methods of thrift and industrious habits in the care of the home.

When once inspired, the farmers show such eagerness to learn, that it gives a hopeful outlook to the farming situation; for as extension work develops, I see in it a solution to many problems of the rural districts. While I do not contend that the Movable Schools will solve all of the problems of rural life, I believe that through them a foundation may be laid upon which much substantial progress can be made. Another hopeful feature of this work is its effort in the training of the young people to love farm life.

Wherever it visits, the Movable School seeks to leave the house and premises whitewashed, build a new poultry house or repair the old one; leave hot beds and cold frames in the garden; leave the orchard pruned, wormed and sprayed; leave shuck mats and rag rugs on the floor; and more than all, it endeavors to leave the family

thrilled with the beauty and attractiveness of an old home made new, and ready to carry out any program that may provide for further transformation. In addition to these examples may be found a sanitary toilet, steps repaired and many other physical improvements from which even the casual passer-by may get a lesson. This "extensionized" home represents a "first aid" in practical rural education and stands as an object lesson. Frequently those who have seen the work done, go back home and improve their own premises. It is encouraging to note the changes which may occur in these communities after several visits of the School on Wheels. Shacks, filth and shiftlessness gradually disappear as a result of the teachings of this emissary of better standards of living.

Even in the earlier days of this work the policy of beginning with the farmer who seemed farthest away from the middle ground of influence and visual aid, was adopted by our workers; and so the methods used must necessarily be elementary, if we are to effectively instruct this class of people. However, the uneducated masses of rural Negroes in the South will never be able to benefit by the improved facilities offered until they are made aware that these advantages exist. This information can best be disseminated by contact, in their own environment, through trained teachers of their own race whose experiences have led them into a sympathetic comprehension of these needs and a leadership that carries with it exacting responsibilities. Our workers are not overladen with formal methods. They possess a natural kinship with the farmer's mind and spirit, which brings

the two together on a common level of appreciation and understanding.

Summing up the drawbacks that the Negro farmer has had to face and is now facing, I repeat that the prevailing tenant system in the South has made fearful inroads on his farm and home life, his health, his school advantages and his church interests.

The Negro farmer must have extension service; must be in position to secure cheaper money on longer terms, with which to buy, operate and improve his farm, and have a guarantee of adequate civil protection. He needs a better home, and labor saving devices in that home, improved livestock, and labor and time saving machinery on his farm. He needs better educational facilities, better school houses, longer school terms, better prepared and more adequately paid teachers, and last, but not least, he needs county, state and federal health units which employ Negro doctors and nurses to go as missionaries of sanitation, into the homes of Negroes, so organized as to penetrate the most backward and remote sections of the South.

This, then, is the great task of all agencies designed to elevate rural Negro people to the established American standards of living. This rather frank discussion of the situation does not indicate discouragement on my part in the least, and I think I voice the sentiments of many who are studying these problems. I believe that as soon as the Negro is taken in as a full fledged member of the economic farm family, he will quickly shoulder his part of the agricultural burden, and the South will take its place along with the other progressive sections

of these United States; and poverty, ignorance and sickness will begin to disappear from among us.

This is evidenced by the fact that the Negro farmer who has come under the influence of systematic instruction is enjoying an emancipation of a new kind, and accordingly is raising his economic status. In agricultural practices, he is learning how to rotate his crops more intelligently; to raise livestock profitably; to market his produce advantageously; to improve and beautify his home; to educate his children and to take better care of himself and the health of his family.

The Movable School idea is no longer an experiment. It is an investment that pays abundantly in dollars and cents. But the truly fine part of these achievements and the effects they are having on the masses of Negro farmers cannot be adequately expressed or measured in terms of actual cash or pounds or bushels of farm produce. Nor can this type of service be comprehended through any statistical arrayal of facts. The deeper significance of it all is seen in the enrichment of the lives of the people—these people who have no other educational advantages.

THE END

APPENDIX

LETTER NO. 1

Letter from my brother to my father upon my arrival at Tuskegee Institute.

Rev. Wm. A. Campbell
Bowman, Georgia.
Dear Sir:

It is with pleasure that I write to inform you that Thomas is here and if he lives he is going to stay here until he makes a man of himself. . . . . If you can do so, please send him some money . . . .I reckon you know what he has.

He arrived here last Thursday with eight cents in money and he has not changed clothes. . . . He likes here very well and is working at the barn and hopes to get his trade in September. . . . . .

Yours truly,
(Signed) W. D. Campbell

LETTER NO. 2

Recommendations from three of my early employers.

Geneva, Alabama
September 14, 1901

To Whom It May Concern:

The bearer, Thomas Campbell, has been in my employment on railroad construction during nearly four months past, and has proved himself to be entirely truthworthy, honest, sober, industrious and steady. I regard him as one of the best men I have ever worked and entitled to the respect and confidence of any employer.

(Signed) Thomas Washington,
General Contractor.

LETTER NO. 3

Jemison Real Estate and Insurance Company, Birmingham, Alabama.

June 2, 1907

To Whom It May Concern:

This is to certify that Thomas M. Campbell has worked for me on my plantation and I have never found a more industrious and painstaking man. He is the only Negro I have ever employed to appreciate the value of time and try to keep busy every minute. I only wish that I could afford to keep him and get more like him.

Yours truly,
(Signed) S. M. Day.

Department of Interior, United States Geological Survey.

LETTER NO. 4

Washington, D. C.
June 28, 1907

To Whom It May Concern:

Mr. T. M. Campbell was in my employ as teamster and camp manager during the field seasons of 1905-06, and I take great pleasure in saying that he proved a thoroughly efficient and trustworthy man. I regard him as a man of good ability and would expect him to "make good" in the line of work which he is now pursuing and in which he seeks advancement.

Very respectfully,
(Signed) Charles Butts,
Assistant Geologist.

LETTER NO. 5

Letter in connection with my appointment.

November 9, 1906

Dr. S. A. Knapp
United States Department of Agriculture
Lake Charles, Louisiana
Dear Dr. Knapp:

Mr. Evans has been with us for a few days and I have just been able to go over matters with him in detail. We have decided upon the following, which I trust will in every way have your approval:

(1) We understand that you agree to appropriate $750.00 per year toward the work outlined in yours of October fourth. $500.00 of this amount to be appropriated for salary and $250.00 to cover expenses; expenses being understood to cover seed and such incidentals as the operator may incur.

(2) We agree to assign Thomas M. Campbell, a graduate of this institution to do this work and have agreed with him upon a salary of $840.00 per year. The difference between your appropriation of $500.00 and this amount to be supplied by us.

(3) It is also to be understood that we agree to make up the difference in the expense as between $250.00, that you appropriate, and such as may be incurred in excess of this sum.

In assigning Mr. Campbell to this work, it is understood that he will devote his entire time to it, and be under the immediate direction of your department as outlined in your letter above referred to; it being however, understood that the Jesup Wagon shall also be operated by him in this connection.

Thanking you for sending Mr. Evans to us, so that we could intelligently discuss the matter and get even a better idea as to what you had in mind, and trusting that the above will meet with your approval, I am

Yours very truly,
(Signed) Booker T. Washington.
Principal.

Approved: (Signed) J. A. Evans, Assistant.

LETTER NO. 6

Formal appointment, United States Department of Agriculture.

Washington, D. C.
November 14, 1906

Mr. Thomas M. Campbell, of the State of Alabama, is hereby appointed collaborator in the Bureau of Plant Industry in the United States Department of Agriculture, at a salary at the rate of one ($1.00) dollar per annum, on the miscellaneous roll, to be paid from the funds appropriated for the Bureau of Plant Industry to meet the emergency caused by the continued spread of the Mexican Boll Weevil in the Southern States.

The above mentioned appointee is hereby required to take the oath of office immediately and file the same, together with a statement of legal and city residence and personal record with the Appointment Clerk in the Department of Agriculture, and report for duty in writing, to the Chief of the Bureau of Plant Industry, and be subject to the rules and orders of the Secretary of Agriculture. This appointment shall take effect on November 10, 1906, he having assumed his duties under his appointment on that date.

(Signed) James S. Wilson,
Secretary of Agriculture

LETTER NO. 7

Comments made during early demonstration days.

Dr. B. T. Washington
Tuskegee Institute, Alabama
Dear Sir:

A Movable School for Negro farmers was conducted by T. M. Campbell in Russell County on the 13th, 14th, and 15th of January, 1915, with C. W. Greene and Mrs. C. W. Calloway, both of Tuskegee Institute, assisting.

I beg to advise you that each daily session of the Movable School was attended by more than 100 Negro farmers coming from every part of the county. I was present at each daily session and saw what was done and heard what was said. In my opinion, the work was a complete suc-

cess in every way and the Negro farmers, in view of the inclement weather of the first day and the conditions of the public highways, over which they travelled, deserve to be commended for their attendance upon the sessions of the school. In my judgment this work is along the right lines for the betterment of the agricultural conditions among the Negroes of this county, and I expect to see immediate effects, on this years crops, from the work done in these sessions of the school. It is my desire that another school of this kind be held for this county by the middle of March, or the first of April, and I would like to see another held in the county by the mid-summer.

In my judgment Prof. Campbell is competent and efficient in this work. His assistants are also competent and efficient. I have nothing but commendation to give in their behalf.

The work done was practical work in which the humblest Negro farmer was interested. It is through work of this kind and through movements of this character that the physical conditions of our Negro farmers and the future welfare of the Negro farmers must be improved.

Yours truly,
(Signed) Frank M. DeGraffenreid
County Superintendent of Education, Russell County.

LETTER NO. 8

Huntsville, Alabama
August 19, 1919

Dr. J. F. Duggar
Auburn, Alabama

I attended the last days session of the Movable School for colored people in Madison County. Think it is the best way you can possibly help them to live better and take care of what they raise. Each department was well handled and the work done before their eyes.

The two things that interested me most were saving of the sweet potatoes and the home made fireless cooker. Every part was good because it was so needed.

I wish you could put one on in every neighborhood in Madison County. I am going to inquire later how many of them put the things into practice they saw demonstrated. That will tell the story.

Why can't we have one for the rural white as well as the colored? With best wishes for the success of your school, I am,

Respectfully yours,
(Signed) Mrs. W. I. Thompson

LETTER NO. 9

A white Alabama home demonstration agent in witnessing one of the schools at work among Negroes in her county, wrote the following:

A few days ago I had an opportunity to observe some splendid work being done among the Negro demonstration members under their efficient farm agent, Dr. Hill. At Big Creek a Movable School was being held under a state man, farm agent, and a woman home agent sent out from Tuskegee.

When I arrived I found that during the four days this simple home had undergone a marvelous change. The house had been painted with inexpensive white-wash paint. The yard had been well laid off in walks. The flowers reset in an orderly attractive manner, the pig pen that formerly was almost against the well, had been moved back and the well built up and white-washed. Other demonstrations in orcharding, dairying, terracing, and livestock judging had been done. Splendid things had been done by the group of forty or fifty women. Practical cooking, soap making, basketry, fly paper making and preserving eggs. I was asked to judge some pretty shopping bags made of corn shucks. These bags were such that anyone would be proud to own.

Such a week as this is certainly worthy of commendation, and very much good will result. I believe all those attending this Movable School already have reaped much benefit, in fact, I know of several instances where houses have been painted and other home improvements made as a result of this great week of instruction.

(Signed) Illa Deon Griffin,
County Home Demonstration Agent.

LETTER NO. 10

Limestone County
August 10, 1921

Dear Dr. Moton:

I attended the Movable School conducted by Mr. T. M. Campbell and his workers at Fort Davis on Friday of last week. This was my first opportunity to see a Movable School in action. I am writing simply to say how very much I was impressed with the work that was done and how far reaching it seems to me such work will be. It is doing the very thing that is needed to teach the people to improve their immediate surroundings and to increase their home comforts. For instance, this school was held at the home of a man who has 250 acres of land and who had money in the bank, but lives in a miserable home.

(Signed) E. C. Roberts,
Director, Academic Department.

LETTER NO. 11

Tuskegee Institute, Ala.
November 23, 1921

T. M. Campbell:

I had intended writing you before this, but it looked as if each day was so crowded I could not get to it. I have just written to Dr. Moton. The Movable School made an excellent record in this county. I have heard nothing but unstinted praise. I think the white people got much good out of it as well as the colored people. Your talks to the Negroes also left a few solid truths and bits of wisdom that can but result in improvements. But it is a long, hard fight and the difficulties are mountainous, but we can go a long way in solving many of the problems. "Everlastingly at it" is the only way to success. The school did not ruffle the feelings of a single person in this county that I have heard of. We want it to come again; we will do more on a second trip than on the first. Thanks and appreciation to you. Let me know when you want me to say or do something.

Yours truly,
(Signed) F. T. Raiford,
Editor, Selma Times-Journal.

LETTER NO. 12

Union Springs, Alabama
Route 2, Box 802
June 1, 1922

Agent M. B. Ivy
Union Springs, Alabama

My Dear Sir:

I am writing to thank you for inviting and urging upon me and my community to attend the Movable School at Aberfoil, May 15-20, 1922. I am sure you will recall how reluctant I was to say I would spend four days in a Movable School at such a busy season. Of course, I knew nothing about it, but felt as usual that it was nothing more than the gathering of farmers to listen to a display of oratory on what a farmer could do. The order given Monday night for all to meet Tuesday morning at 8:00 o'clock at the home of Mr. W. M. Cowan, was about the only thing that got me out the first day. I wondered what could really happen at 8:00 o'clock with grown ups. On reaching the house, I found myself completely upset in my imaginations and wholly out of harmony with the work. Everybody in their work clothes and too busy to see me. The class in terracing was in a near-by field where the farmers were given lessons on the use of the tripod and target in running terraces. Another class was standing around a large barrel where they were given lessons in making and applying whitewash and mixing stains. Other classes were in rug making, rural nursing, canning and testing eggs, dyeing, care of the sick room, poultry house building, sanitary toilet, soap making, lawn

building, and in fact everything was being taught that makes rural life one of happiness and contentment. Of course, this was my first day's experience in a Movable School.

The second day I was there on time with an old discarded hand saw and suit that fitted me for the occasion. I soon learned to sharpen and set my saw along with eighteen other farmers. We were given lessons on the use of the square and the cutting of rafters, then on to the cutting out and building of poultry houses which gave us all a chance to try our saws to the line which everyone enjoyed. One farmer remarked to me that he had to hold back his newly sharpened saw to keep the handle from going on through the timber with the teeth. Each hour throughout the day revealed some new phase of the work. At 4:00 o'clock each day, all classes were dismissed for play which met my most hearty approval for I certainly had worked in school as never before. High-kick, tug of war and volley ball were the most wholesome games in which I have ever taken part.

I must admit that every member of the force is an expert in his or her line of work. The community welcomes their return at any time for another week's work. Cowan's home stands off as a living demonstration of what can be done with an old dilapidated house and broken down surroundings. From the inspiration gained at the Movable School here, the community today is ordering a complete volley ball outfit to be used at the community center for wholesome games.

Many wishes for your continued success, I am

(Signed) Reverend L. W. Owens

LETTER NO. 13

Mr. T. M. Campbell:

Your letter of the twenty-first inst. with its interesting content was just received. These pictures which you have sent certainly tell the story of progress, and I shall look forward with great interest to the story, and to the showing that is to be made during the next several years as the shrubbery develops, and other steps of improvements are made.

I was very much impressed with the simple way of going about such improvement; only the equipment at hand was used and the farmer and his wife taking the first step, which to my mind is the most fundamental in all lines of educational endeavor. I have called Mr. Evan's attention to the pictures and your interesting story, and he is equally interested in it. . . . . .

(Signed) C. L. Chambers,
Field Agent, Southern States,
United States Department of Agriculture,
Extension Service
December 27, 1928.

Recent comments sent in reply to the following query made by Mr. Richard F. Hudson, as sent out by him to Tuberculosis Association executive secretaries and delegates.

1001 Protective Life Building
Birmingham, Alabama
May 15, 1930

Tuberculosis Secretaries
State and Local
V. S. A.
Greetings:

Your criticisms of the demonstration of the work of the Alabama Movable School will be appreciated.

If you "sat in" on this session at Memphis, you know what we are asking. The Alabama Tuberculosis Association has a part in this demonstration. It is our wish to make the work as effective as possible. Our directors are very much interested in the program, we will be glad to have your "reactions."

I shall be pleased if you will write me your impressions. If you have ideas as to the technique, scope, content, or any other phase, such impressions will enable us to correct the short comings as well as enlarge the present program.

Professor Campbell will also appreciate your comment, and with your permission, I shall transmit to him a summary of the replies received to this inquiry. . . . . .

Thanking you and with every good wish, I am,

Cordially yours,
(Signed) Richard F. Hudson,
Executive Secretary, Alabama Tuberculosis Association.

So overwhelming was the response to the above letter and so frank were the reactions expressed that in passing the comment to the author, Mr. Hudson was particularly anxious that since they represented such an extraordinarily broad range of opinion they should, as far as possible, be made public. For that reason, we are recording excerpts from some of these letters.

Mrs. R. S. Phifer, Executive Secretary, Mississippi Tuberculosis Association, Jackson, Mississippi: "While it was not my privilege to see the demonstration of the Movable School at Memphis, I presume it was in effect the same as the demonstration at Nashville last fall.

It may be that my "reactions" after this long time may be of some interest as well as the first impressions of those who recently saw it—at all events will send this letter for what it may be worth to you.

It seems to me that for practical demonstrations—forgetting an idea over to the public in a simple direct way, it was as cleverly put over as

anything I have ever seen—there was back of it sincerity of purpose. Looking back on it, I feel that I saw not merely a demonstration, but a part of the actual working of an intelligently planned program of education. . .

H. E. Dearholt, Executive Secretary, Wisconsin Anti-Tuberculosis Association, Milwaukee, Wisconsin: "I saw the demonstration of the work of the Alabama Movable School and I think it one of the most interesting things at the Memphis meeting.

On the way home, Dr. J. W. Coon, Medical Director of River Pines Sanatorium, Stevens Point, Wisconsin, notwithstanding his primary interest in the medical aspects of the tuberculosis problem, talked more about that demonstration than about any other session he attended. I have no criticism whatsoever to offer—that is of an adverse nature. On the contrary, the show seemed to me to be very well balanced in interest, and all the better for the diversity of the subjects handled. A more gluttonous effort to pack more health and more tuberculosis propaganda into it (while a natural tendency on the part of us health workers) would, I think, weaken it. You are getting down to fundamentals, and in a very sound and pedagogical manner."

Chauncy B. McDonald, Executive Secretary, South Carolina Tuberculosis Association, Columbia, South Carolina: "I remember the work of the Alabama Movable School from the Nashville meeting. I thought it splendid. I have no criticism to offer. I will ask Mrs. Halsey and Dr. Smith of Charleston to give a report on it for your benefit. Miss Oetzel of Greenville was very enthusiastic about it. She considered it one of the high points of the meeting. I asked her why she could not work out a plan for Greenville County similar to the Movable School. I believe she is going to take the matter up with the Negro workers in the county and one or two state workers. Mrs. Goodwyn, Secretary of the Richland Association, says that she considered the demonstration one of the best things at the meeting. . . . ."

Miss Ruth Beal, Executive Secretary, Benton County Tuberculosis Association Bentonville, Arkansas: "I am sure that I have no criticism of the very marvelous demonstration given by the Alabama Movable School. To me it was one of the most outstanding things of the conference, and I was interested in every phase of the work done so ably by the staff. I thought Professor Campbell was doing a very outstanding piece of work and it must be very gratifying to him to have such an opportunity for leadership among his people. Would that we had much more of this type of work all over our Southland. . . . ."

Sherwood H. Smith, Executive Secretary, Florida Public Health Association, Jacksonville, Florida: . . . . "I certainly appreciated the opportunity to see the Alabama Movable School in action. It certainly is bringing the teaching method as closely as possible to the actual doings, which is the real way in which all of us learn. (I believe that is pedagogically

sound). I wonder if by any chance you have a syllabus or outline of the school activities at any one demonstration. If so, I should like to have one of these for reference in our office. . . ."

L. B. McBrayer, Managing Director, North Carolina Tuberculosis Association, Southern Pines, North Carolina: . . . . "I congratulate you upon the idea of checking over the work of the Alabama Movable School. I sat in at the beginning and was very much impressed with the address of Professor Campbell. . . . . ."

James P. Faulkener, Managing Director, Georgia Tuberculosis Association, Atlanta, Georgia: . . . . "I did not witness the demonstration of the Alabama Movable School this year, but as you know, I saw it at Memphis last year. I am glad to tell you, however, that I heard more favorable comments about this particular program than any that was staged at Memphis. My personal appraisement of it is that it is about the best thing I know."

Miss Bernard S. Coleman, Executive Secretary, Hudson County Tuberculosis League, Jersey City, New Jersey: "May I say that the demonstration of the work of the Alabama Movable School was one of the finest educational demonstrations that I have ever seen. The thing that appealed to me most was the fact that the talks were given so simple and direct. I could visualize how easily the audience would be won over by the speakers. The physical demonstration was so real and effectively practical that it must take root wherever shown."

Miss Mary A. Meyers, Executive Secretary, Marion County Tuberculosis Association, Indianapolis, Indiana: "You asked for my criticism of the demonstration of the Alabama Movable School. I certainly have no criticism to offer. As I sat in the auditorium I almost envied you this wonderful opportunity you have to put over such a splendid piece of educational work. We have been talking about it a great deal in our office and wondered if we could not use our county agent and county home demonstration agent in reaching some of our poor districts. Of course, in a county like ours, we do not have a great deal of poverty in the rural districts. Most of our poverty is in the city. I certainly do wish we might have such an opportunity of reaching our Negroes here with instruction as valuable as your Movable School provides. I was especially interested in the nurse and the home maker. We could use them so well in our colored districts here."

J. W. Becker, Executive Secretary, Missouri Tuberculosis Association, St. Louis, Missouri: "I saw the full Alabama Movable School Demonstration at Memphis. It both fascinated and instructed me. The demonstration as a community project was comprehensive, scientific, practical and understandable."

George F. Grander, Executive Secretary, Tuberculosis and Health Society, Detroit, Michigan: "I have no criticism to make of the demonstration of the work of the Alabama Movable School. I was quite amazed at it as a matter of fact. One point about it that impressed me was the amount of effort put into educational activities for the Negro."

M. A. Auerbach, Executive Secretary, Indiana Tuberculosis Association, Indianapolis, Indiana: "I enjoyed the demonstrations of the Alabama Movable School as given at Memphis very much. The arrangement of the talks and material used were good, and the presentation excellent. There is no doubt in my mind that this method of carrying the message of tuberculosis prevention to colored people should and must be productive of good results."

Dr. L. T. Lee, City and County Health Officer, Dallas County Health Department, Selma, Alabama: "It has been my privilege to observe the work of the Movable School, sponsored by Tuskegee Institute in Dallas County and the great good it has done for the colored people as regards their health. I commend it most heartily to those interested in the welfare of the colored people in Dallas County as something they can contribute to and expect to get value returned."

Ernest D. Easton, Executive Secretary, New Jersey Tuberculosis League, Newark, New Jersey: "The consensus of opinion of the New Jersey workers who saw the Movable School was most favorable. The thing that impressed me was that you used one opportunity by one group to put over the whole health message for the family as well as the livestock."

Mrs. Blanche H. DeKoning, of the Grand Rapids Anti-Tuberculosis Society, Grand Rapids, Michigan: "I was much impressed with Professor Campbell's work and the personality of all the people who participated in that program. It occurred to me that their sense of humor must be particularly effective with the class of people amongst whom they work. As I looked on I learned a great deal and it seemed to me that such a group moving over a state in far corners where there is practically no organization and no leadership, their message certainly must fall on virgin soil."

Robert B. Watson, Industrial Secretary, Chicago Tuberculosis Institute, Chicago, Illinois: "It would be very superflous for me to send along my criticism of the demonstration of the work of the Alabama Movable School at Memphis. You know perfectly well how enthusiastic I was and I don't think I can add anything further to what I said before. I think it was the greatest contribution which the National Association has made for the benefit of all secretaries in the past ten years. I heard comments on the train coming back Saturday night which were just as enthusiastic as those which I heard down in Memphis. Everybody was delighted. The thing which struck me running through all the comments was that most

of the people got suggestions for technique in carrying out health education. So I feel that the Alabama Movable School will probably be responsible for changing or adding to some of the technique in health education in the North."

Harvey Dee Brown, Director, Philadelphia Health Council, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: "In the first place it was interesting, in the second place it was excellent teaching, and in the third place, the demonstration was well presented."

Miss Etta M. Dobbin, Executive Secretary, Wyoming Tuberculosis Association, Cheynne, Wyoming: "I have yours of May 15 relative to the comments on your Movable School. I regret very much that I was not at the Memphis meeting to hear the various speakers in connection with this very unique project, but I do wish to say that Mrs. Charlotte R. Athey, the Executive Secretary from Idaho, stopped with me for a day upon her return from Memphis and she told me that the idea and the talk regarding the Alabama Movable School were one of the high spots of the whole convention. In fact, she talked more about it than she did any other one thing."

Dr. Philip P. Jacobs, Director, Publications and Extension Service, National Tuberculosis Association, New York City: "On the whole, I consider this demonstration a most admirable piece of technique."

J. P. Kranz, Executive Secretary, Tennessee Tuberculosis Association Nashville, Tennessee: "I am writing to state that I think probably the biggest single attraction at the National Conference on Tuberculosis at Memphis was the Alabama Movable School. I think it was not only the biggest attraction, but I think it was conceded to be the outstanding piece of health educational work of the conference. I am firmly of the opinion that it has made a lasting impression upon the National Tuberculosis Association personnel. I think it is rather a tribute to the school to be able to hold a group of people largely resident in urban territory and have them keenly interested in milk production, animal husbandry, gardening and home economics. . . . . ."

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The Movable school goes to the Negro
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